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THEMSELVES KINGS OF MEMPHIS!

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47727  Sept. 1987

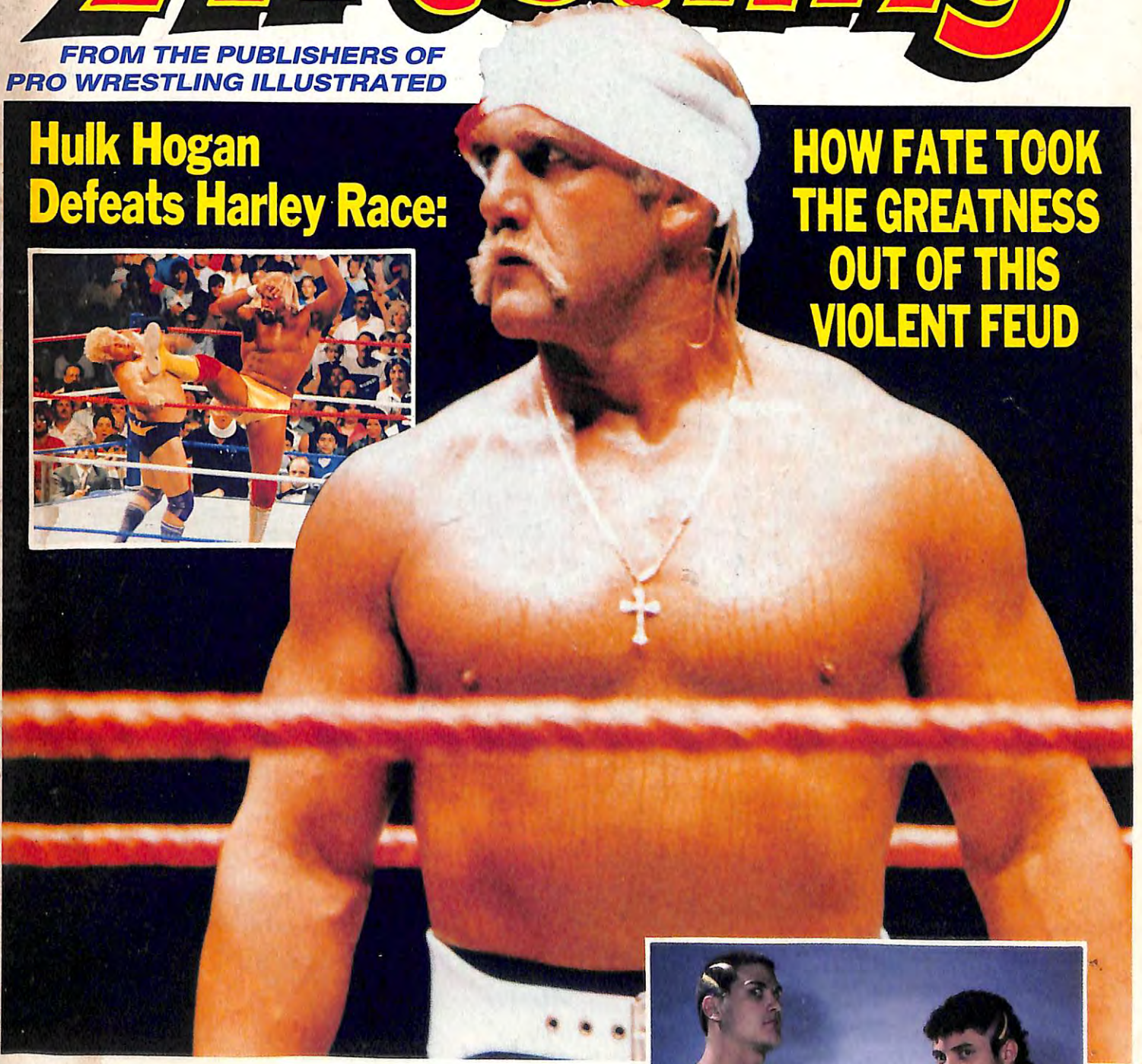
Wrestling

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Defeats Harley Race:**



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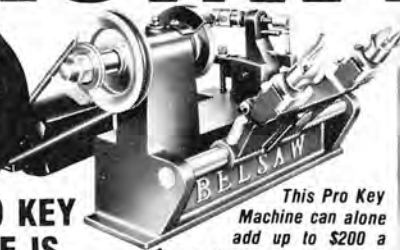
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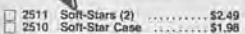
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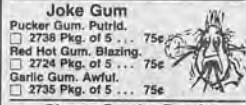
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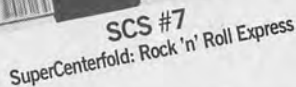
TOMMY RICH & AUSTIN IDOL DECLARE THEMSELVES KINGS OF MEMPHIS!

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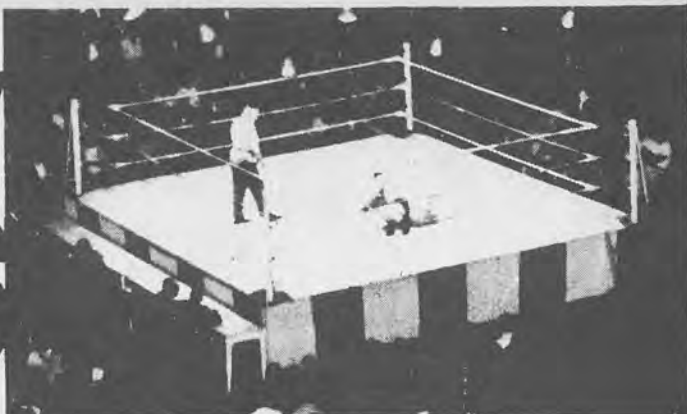
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ANOTHER BIASED REF

I am writing this letter with the hope that it will open someone's eyes in the AWA. I am concerned about referee Scott LeDoux.

First of all, in the past couple of weeks on ESPN, LeDoux has been very incompetent. Just as Playboy Buddy Rose was about to punch a preliminary wrestler, LeDoux grabbed

his arm. Rose's opponent then got in a few punches and LeDoux didn't do anything. On another occasion, The Midnight Rockers were wrestling Tony Leone and Rick Gantner when Leone put a neckbreaker on Marty Jannetty and attempted a pin. LeDoux then nonchalantly pushed Leone off. The Rockers later spent 11 seconds in the ring together at one time! The Midnights went on to win the match.

LeDoux should also be banned because of his personal grudge against wrestlers like Larry Zbyszko and Super Ninja. How is someone supposed to ref a fair match with someone he personally hates?

So come on (AWA president Stanley) Blackburn. Open your eyes and ban LeDoux.

ANDY REDMOND
Mt. Airy, MD

BAD ANNOUNCING

In case you haven't noticed, let me be the one to tell you that Larry Nelson's announcing on AWA TV broadcasts leaves much to be desired. I've often overlooked his blatant favoritism toward fan favorites and setting up one of his ring introductions by saying, "Now let's go to the handsome ring announcer in Las Vegas." But now he has stooped to the sub-level of a Gorilla Monsoon-esque broadcasting style by lying to the viewers.

After yet another replay of the ill-fated tag team match involving Greg Gagne and Scott Hall vs. The Super Ninja and Larry Zbyszko (which also involved Nick Bockwinkel, Mr. Saito, Ray Stevens, and a half-dozen preliminary wrestlers), Nelson began hyping

an upcoming Stevens-Bockwinkel reunion match. Then he began listing the injuries received as a result of that tag team match (which should be put in the "ancient history" section of the AWA archives; it's so old the tape must be wearing out). Here's the big lie: Nelson said, "Scott Hall is still out of wrestling." He quickly brushed that comment off and ended the segment.

Who's he trying to fool? Any knowledgeable fan of this sport knows Scott Hall is wrestling in Florida. Has the AWA decided to air that old videotape constantly in the hopes that fans will get the impression Scott Hall still wrestles for them, but is injured?

My advice to the AWA would be to concentrate on finding new talent and improving their roster instead of clinging to their once-future star who they helped blossom and watched leave the nest.

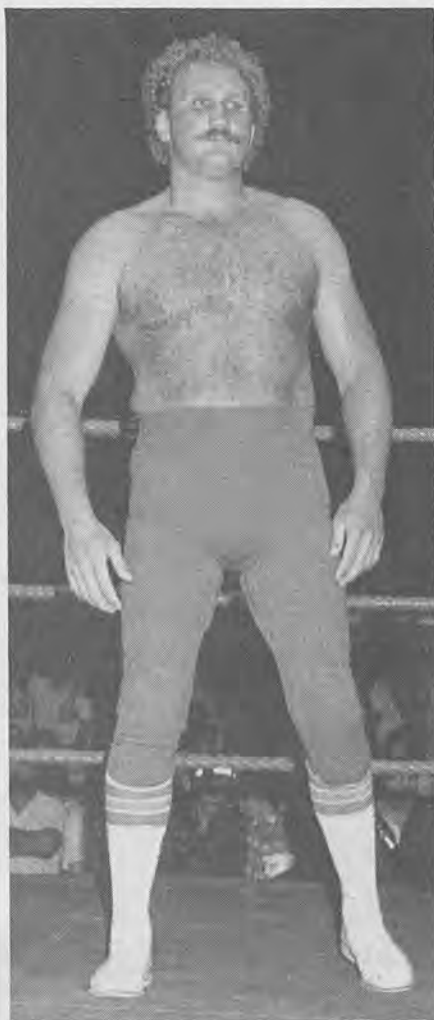
JEFF SHARKEY
Hortonville, WI

WORLD NO CLASS

In the May 1987 issue, Benjamin Ward of Dallas wrote a letter belittling Jason Cohen of New York for supporting Brian Adias for turning on the so-called great Von Erich family ("Not The Texas Way"). Well, Mr. Ward, none of this would have happened if the Von Erichs would have given Adias a title match.

We all know Fritz Von Erich pulled his minor-league promotion out of the NWA so his sons would have a version of a world title. They couldn't beat Ric Flair or Rick Rude (two wrestlers with real talent), so they go and strip Chris

(Continued on page 62)



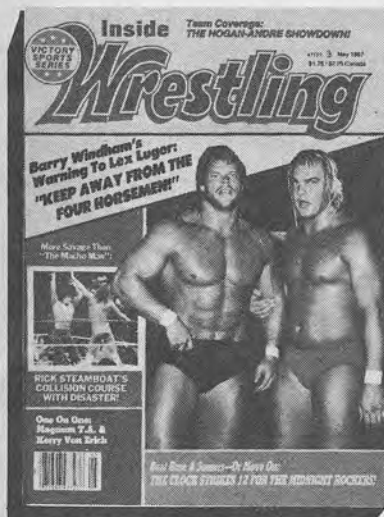
Scott LeDoux should be banned from refereeing in the AWA because he's incompetent and shows favoritism, writes Andy Redmond.

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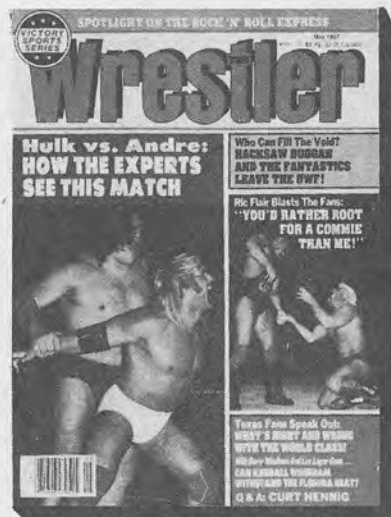
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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Stu
Saks

Editor-in-Chief

Amidst all the confusion of the Jerry Lawler-Tommy Rich/Austin Idol feud in the Mid-Southern area, one very important fact seems to have been forgotten: It was Jerry Lawler who started Tommy Rich in this business.

Without Lawler, Tommy wouldn't have been very rich at all. He'd probably still be making minimum wage and watching Lawler from the cheap seats of the Mid-South Coliseum. When Tommy was 17 years old, he was pumping gas in Hendersonville, Tennessee. He had a heralded past as a high school athlete, but that was behind him. His future prospects were bleak. He received the break of a lifetime when Lawler drove in to his gas station for a fill up. When Rich was able to calm himself after meeting his idol (Lawler remembers that Rich was so nervous that he spilt a gallon of gas down the side of his Lincoln Continental), he asked "The King" if he would train him to be a professional wrestler.

Lawler was impressed with the youngster's background, but he was even more impressed with his enthusiasm. He saw in Tommy the same desire that he had before he received his first break. He gave Rich the address of the gym where he trained and told him to be there the following day.

Both of these men's careers have taken some odd twists and turns since that day over a decade ago, and now they are together again—at each other's throats. Rich wants nothing more in life than to rid the sport of the man who is responsible for him being there.

For his part, Lawler never brings up the fact that he gave Rich his start. He doesn't want it to appear that he's saying, "Oh, Tommy, you owe me so much. So please leave me alone." He's too proud to do that. Way back, Rich learned from Lawler how to be a wrestler. It's too bad he didn't also learn how to be a man.



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TOP SECRET

Behind the Dressing Room Door

by **David
Rosenbaum**

“MY FATHER IS Afa.” He said it deeply and with great pride. I didn’t know what to say.

“Afa who?” I responded, honestly not knowing what he was talking about.

“What do you mean, ‘Afa who?’ ” he replied, sounding deeply hurt. “Samoa Afa, you imbecile, one of the greatest wrestlers of all time. I am the son of Afa. I come from a royal family.”

“So that is why they call you The Tahitian Prince,” I said.

“That is not correct.”

“But then why do they call you The Tahitian Prince? Are you from Tahiti?”

“Of course not. I am the son of Afa the Samoan. I am from Samoa.”

“You’d better explain,” I said, now baffled by the conversation. “I don’t understand.”

“I wrestled many times in Tahiti,” he answered, “and the Tahitian people bow down to me. I am a great hero in Tahiti. I have won many matches there. The people there have bestowed a great honor upon me by naming me The Tahitian Prince. Tahitian wrestling fans are much smarter than American fans.”

“I see. And your father is Afa.”

“That is correct.”

“Afa the Samoan.”

“You are a quick learner.”

The conversation was off to a slow start. I was sent to Florida by Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks to interview The Tahitian Prince, but had not been supplied with any background information. In fact, there seemed to be some confusion in the office about whether there was any background info on The Tahitian Prince. Apparently, Se-

(Continued on page 54)

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THIS MONTH I want to talk about a truly remarkable event in wrestling, an event I am proud to have been a part of: Wrestlethon '87.

Wrestlethon '87 was aired over WATL-TV Channel 36 in Atlanta and was hosted by Joe Pedicino, Gordon Solie, and Boni Blackstone. Joe and Gordon, of course, co-host the syndicated *Pro Wrestling This Week* program, produced at the WATL studios; Joe and Boni co-host the eight-hour *Superstars of Wrestling* show aired weekly over WATL. Bill Apter and I were asked to help out with on-location segments and in-studio interviews.

I didn't know what to expect from the start, but I had a hunch we were in for something more than just a few interviews when producer Ken LaMorta telephoned and said, "Have we got you fellas a ride! You're not gonna believe this—a 40-foot limo!"

Why would we need a limo if we were going to be in the studio interviewing wrestlers?

"Hooters? What's Hooters?"



Peters and Apter at Hooters

Readers in Atlanta and Florida will quickly recognize the ignorance of my question. Several days before Wrestlethon when I asked that question of Pedicino, who said that Bill and I would be whisked away by limo to do remote broadcasts from two Hooters clubs, he just chuckled. "Oh, you guys are gonna have a *good* time. Good thing you're both leaving your wives home!"

I found out soon enough what Hooters is.

Hooters is a night club where the main feature isn't the food or the drink, it's the rather, **ahem**, pulchritudinous waitresses who serve you. And the job of Bill and myself was to spend several hours at the two Hooters clubs near Atlanta, do some on-air broadcasts from the clubs, and raise money for Wrestlethon.

It's a rough job, but somebody had to do it.

Hooters was a lot of fun, but the main purpose of Wrestlethon was more than just fun, it was to raise money to help two Atlanta policemen, officers J.J. Biello and Richard Williams, who had been shot—and rendered quadriplegics—in the line of duty.

Donation cans had been set up in Magic Market convenience stores throughout Atlanta. Joe and Boni, along with Continental area wrestlers Wendell Cooley and The Rock 'n' Roll Rebels, made a personal appearance at Marietta Isuzu early in the afternoon the day of

ON THE ROAD

with
CRAIG PETERS

Wrestlethon and the car dealership donated money for every automobile sold that day.

And at WATL during Wrestlethon, as fans watched the show on a wide-screen TV set up on the lawn in front of the station, dozens of Atlanta police officers had their hats out for passing motorists whose generosity stunned me. At one point during Wrestlethon,

I went out to the street to see how fundraising was going. I was amazed to find two five-gallon water bottles

jammed with dollar bills. And not only singles, but fives, tens, twenties, and a few fiftys. One motorist even donated a hundred dollar bill!



Money raised during Wrestlethon

Among those who had taped special segments for Wrestlethon concerning the two officers were Georgia Secretary of State Max Cleland, Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, Atlanta Chief of Police Morris Redding, Police

Major Eldrin Bell, Police Commissioner George Napper, and several friends and family members of the two officers.

A.J. Biello, brother of injured officer J.J. Biello, was on hand in the WATL studios and delivered some good news during Wrestlethon: J.J. had finally been taken off his respirator and was breathing on his own.

When it was all over, well over \$10,000 had been raised to help out the families and pay the mounting hospital bills. It won't take care of all the expenses, but it will help.

And so a salute to Joe Pedicino, who put it all together; to Ken LaMorta, who spent over 100 hours the week before Wrestlethon preparing for the event (whew!); to Gordon Solie and Boni Blackstone, who did a tremendous job handling the on-air hosting of Wrestlethon (even if they did make some fun of me and Bill at Hooters); to Audrey Osborne ("Hello, Wrestlethon '87!"), who fielded nearly 3,000 telephone calls over the course of 20 hours; to all the police officers who were on hand throughout the evening, soliciting funds in front of the station; to Bill Bohannon, who put the interviews with officials, family, and friends together to form an inspirational piece that really drove home the purpose of Wrestlethon; to everyone else at WATL who made it through Wrestlethon, including Melissa McKensie and Barry Johnson and Ken Norton and Fred Eberhart and Steve Hill and Tom Vardase (feel better, buddy), and anyone else I forgot:

Good work, everybody. You can all be proud. □

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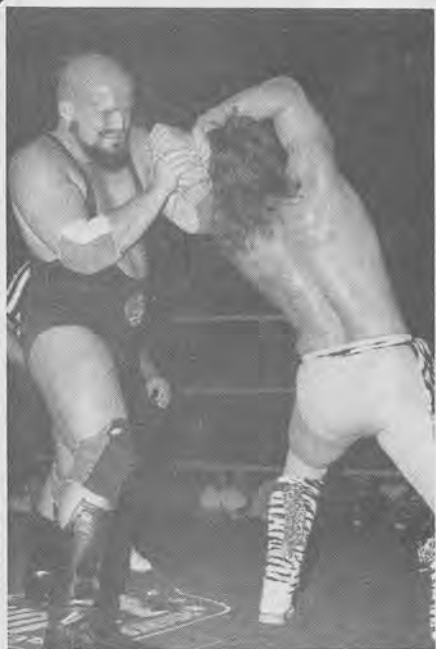
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ZUKHOV VS. JANNETTY

Boris Zukhov and **Stanislaus Ustinov** captured the AWA World heavyweight title from **The Midnight Rockers** on May 25 in Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Zukhov covered **Marty Jannetty** for the victory, which followed nearly 20 minutes of solid wrestling action. AWA insiders have claimed that the Rockers' reckless partying style is what ultimately cost them the championship, but the Rockers deny the charge. "When the bell rings and it's time to wrestle, we're always at a peak, both mentally and physically," said Jannetty. "Anybody can lose a match. What upsets us is that The Russians haven't granted us a rematch." So upset are the Rockers by what has happened that they have begun negotiations to wrestle in the WWF.

Dusty Rhodes has suffered an injured left leg at the hands of **Ric Flair** and **Lex Luger**. Rhodes and **Nikita Koloff** were wrestling Flair and Luger in Raleigh, North Carolina, with **J.J. Dillon**, **Arn Anderson**, **Tully Blanchard**, and Tully's "personal secretary" **Dark Journey** at ringside. During the match, Dusty placed Flair in a figure-four leglock. Luger and Koloff were battling outside the ring when Blanchard grabbed a metal suitcase, hit Rhodes in the head, and used the suitcase to bash Rhodes' left leg. Flair held Dusty's leg as Tully continued hitting it. Dillon came in the ring and helped hold Dusty down. Tully placed the suitcase under Dusty's leg, scaled the ropes, and came crashing down on the leg several times. **The Rock 'n' Roll Express** and Koloff finally broke up the attack, but the damage was already done. "Dusty Rhodes is on the precipice," claimed Dillon, "he is ready to fall once and for all. How many injuries can one body take? We'll soon find out. 1987 will be the year that **The Four Horsemen** finally eliminate 'The American Dream' once and for all!"



HACKSAW DUGGAN

In a shocking development, **Hackshaw Duggan** and **The Iron Sheik** have been suspended indefinitely by the WWF following their highly publicized May 27 arrest by New Jersey State Police. Duggan was driving a rental car when a police officer spotted him drinking a beer. "When they were pulled over, the officer smelled the odor of burnt marijuana," said **Sgt. John Cavaleri**. "He then saw roaches in the ash tray, checked the interior, and searched their briefcases. The officer found three grams of coke in Sheik's shaving kit and 25 grams of marijuana in a bag belonging to Dug-

cized May 27 arrest by New Jersey State Police. Duggan was driving a rental car when a police officer spotted him drinking a beer. "When they were pulled over, the officer smelled the odor of burnt marijuana," said **Sgt. John Cavaleri**. "He then saw roaches in the ash tray, checked the interior, and searched their briefcases. The officer found three grams of coke in Sheik's shaving kit and 25 grams of marijuana in a bag belonging to Dug-



IRON SHEIK

gan." Duggan was to be charged with possession of marijuana and a motor vehicle offense of operating with open alcohol; Sheik was to be charged with possession of cocaine and marijuana. Sheik was released on \$5,000 bail, while Duggan was released on his own recognizance. They were scheduled to appear before a Middletown Township judge on June 1. There is no official word on why these two men, believed to be rivals, were traveling together.

Rufus R. Jones captured the Central States title from **Bulldog Bob**

Brown in Kansas City, Kansas, due to the interference of Brown's friend, **Rip Rogers** . . . **Kevin Von Erich** is feeling better after an incident in Ft. Worth, Texas, where he collapsed during an eight-man tag team match. Kevin reports that he will not be canceling his upcoming tour of Japan, as many fans had believed he would . . . **The Bullet** has returned to the Continental area.

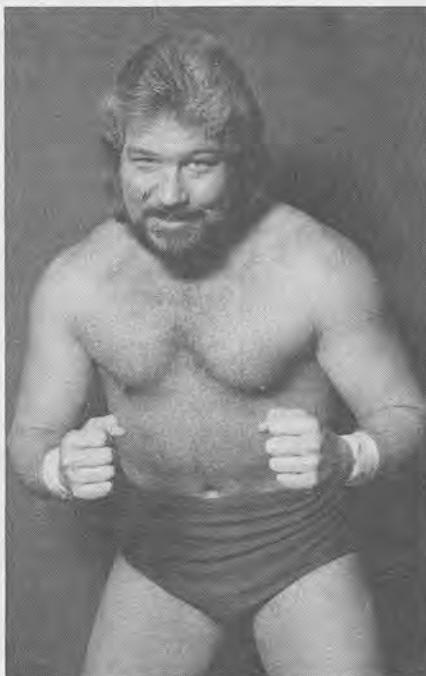
Following two emergency meetings



DINGO WARRIOR

of World Class officials, **Dingo Warrior** and **Tony Atlas** have been reinstated as World Class Texas champion and World Class TV champion, respectively. The titles had been declared vacant due to Dingo and Atlas not defending the belts within the specified 30-day time limit, but both men made appeals to the World Class brass on the basis of what were termed "extenuating circumstances" by World Class official **Rick Hazzard**. "Dingo

and Atlas had a point," Hazzard told *Inside Wrestling*. "They claimed that their requests for title matches were ignored in the state of disarray following the suicide of **Mike Von Erich**. Looking back over the match records, there were requests for title matches that were simply lost in the paperwork or forgotten in the wake of Mike's death. After many hours of discussion, World Class officials came to the decision to reinstate Dingo and Atlas as champions rather than continue to have title vacancies while tournaments were being set up."



TED DiBIASE

Reportedly heading to the WWF as of press time are **Bam Bam Bigelow**, **Rick Rude**, and **Ted DiBiase**. Any of these three competent grapplers would prove to be a strong challenge to either Intercontinental champion **Rick Steamboat** or WWF kingpin **Hulk Hogan** . . . **Robert Fuller** and **Jimmy Golden** have captured the Southeast Continental belts from **Jerry Stubbs** and **Tony An-**



SGT. SLAUGHTER

thony . . . **Sgt. Slaughter** is the heavyweight champion of the new United States Wrestling Alliance.

And finally, I'd like to thank **Joe Pedicino** for inviting me and Managing Editor **Craig Peters** to be a part of *Wrestlethon '87*, a 20-hour fundraiser in Atlanta aired over WATL-TV Channel 36. *Wrestlethon '87* raised over \$10,000 to benefit **J.J. Biello** and **Richard Williams**, two Atlanta police officers shot in the line of duty and rendered quadriplegics. The money will go toward helping the families and paying off mounting hospital bills. Pedicino, along with **Gordon Solie**, **Boni Blackstone**, **Ken LaMorta**, and everyone else at WATL, deserve a hearty round of applause for their charity efforts.

That's all for now, fans! See you at the matches! □



THE Wrestler

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January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.
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June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.
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September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.
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November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.
December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.
January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.
February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.
March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.
April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.
May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.
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October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.
November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.
December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.
January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.
February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.
March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.
May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.
June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.
July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.
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THE WRESTLER

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THE INSIDER

By Eddie Ellner

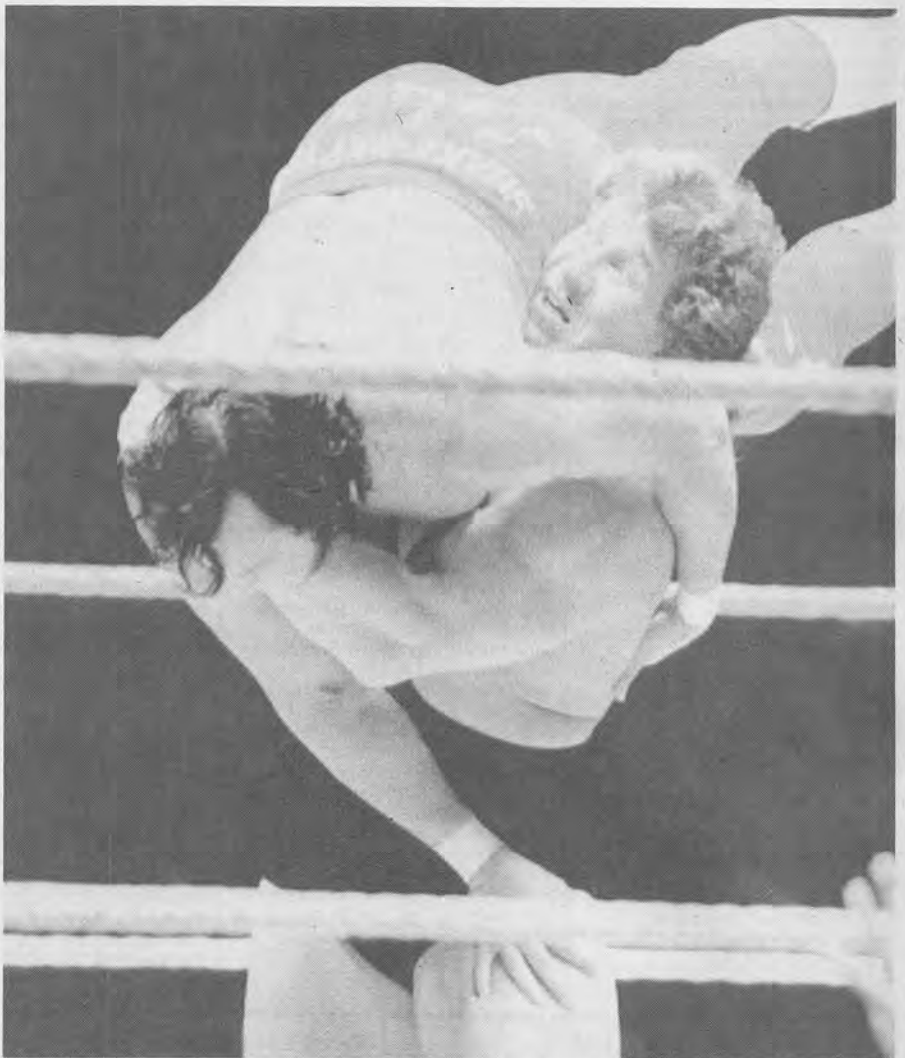
[The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.]

NEWS ITEM: Jailbird Ken Patera returns to the WWF.

"From one prison to another." That's how a close friend of mine has described Ken Patera's triumphant return to the WWF. I have sources digging hard and deep to unearth the complete details of Patera's latest contract. Several reliable rumors have him begging WWF promoters for quintuple what he made in the AWA before incarceration, but I have my doubts.

Patera is one of matdom's true schizophrenics, a flawed but valuable commodity. Olympic medal winner and convicted felon—how many resumes can boast of those two achievements?

If you were surprised to see Patera return "rehabilitated," you have much to learn about sociology. Patera's been knocking around with the muck of the earth for the last two years. In most cases, people coming out of a prison atmosphere are more influenced by the drug addicts and killers they're in with than by the so-called rehabilitation program the prisons offer. Patera, obviously, was not a nice guy when he went to prison for throwing a boulder threw a McDonald's window and then, along with Mr. Saito, having a battle royal with a group



Ken Patera slams The Honky Tonk Man. Eddie Ellner doesn't believe Patera's claim that he was rehabilitated in prison. Eventually, Ellner writes, Patera will expose his true self and turn on Hulk Hogan.

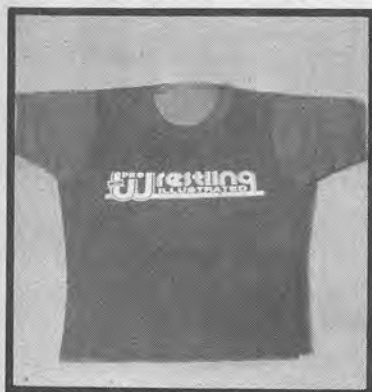
of police officers that included a woman.

It would be a nice reflection on the prison system to believe that his professed change is legitimate. It would also be naive. The feeling here is that Patera learned in prison how to be a con man. And there couldn't be an easier mark than Hulk Hogan and the wrestling fans.

And even if it isn't a con, don't expect Patera to stay good for long. Old habits die hard. Hulk Hogan can't keep friends (witness the Paul Orndorff situation), and Patera doesn't want Hogan's friendship, he wants the validation that comes with Hogan's approval. That he has. Next, he will want Hulk Hogan's title and what little

(Continued on page 48)

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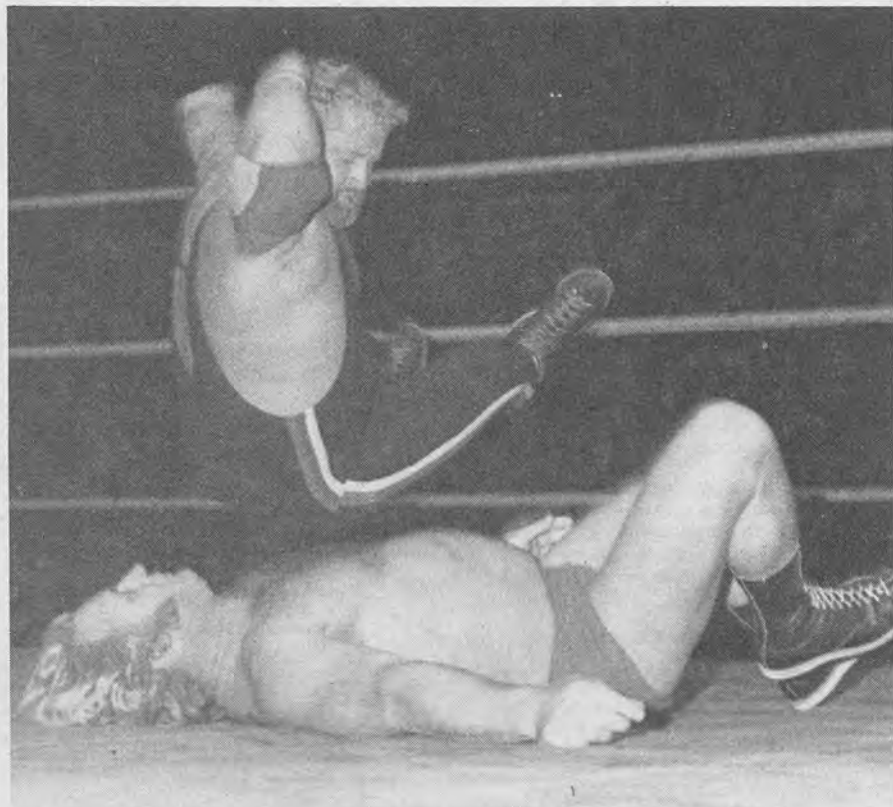
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A ON ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER



ONE OF THE most memorable evenings of wrestling I attended in person was a card in Minneapolis—or maybe it was St. Paul or possibly Chicago; the memory has receded into the past too far to truly remember. It was about six years ago, where the main event was an AWA title bout between Nick Bockwinkel and Larry Hennig. My date was a photographer upon whom I had a mild crush, and who was there to record the matches for his magazine. (It was not Bill Apter.)

Afterward, we went out for sandwiches and I got to meet Larry Hennig in person. He was a big, brutish man with a great red beard and an overbearing man-

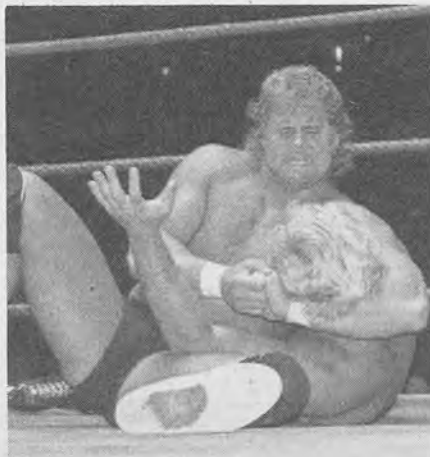
ner. I remember him returning his steak because it was overcooked. He called the waiter a "stupid animal," and threatened to bite his head off. The waiter fled the restaurant.

Hennig may have been upset over the night's events. Bockwinkel had survived two of his patented "ax attacks" and pinned the midwestern challenger in under 10 minutes. Hennig needed 18 stitches to repair a gaping cut at the corner of his mouth—courtesy of a stunning Bockwinkel left hook—and every time he bit on his steak, a grimace would alight his face.

I thought he was a big animal and a thoughtless pig; I silently smiled each time he brought his fork to his mouth. Sitting with us were two of Hennig's friends, hulking creatures themselves who grunted through dinner, and his son Curt. The contrast was remarkable. Curt was soft-spoken and polite. He said "please" and "thank you." And although I couldn't be sure, he appeared to grimace each time his father opened his big mouth, too.

The evening crawled to its conclusion. After watching my date fawn at Larry Hennig's every gesture, my affection for him quickly disappeared, like Hennig's hopes for winning the AWA title had vanished earlier in the evening. It was clear the "boys" were going out for drinks afterward anyway, and my presence was not desired.

As I got my own coat, Curt
(Continued on page 56)



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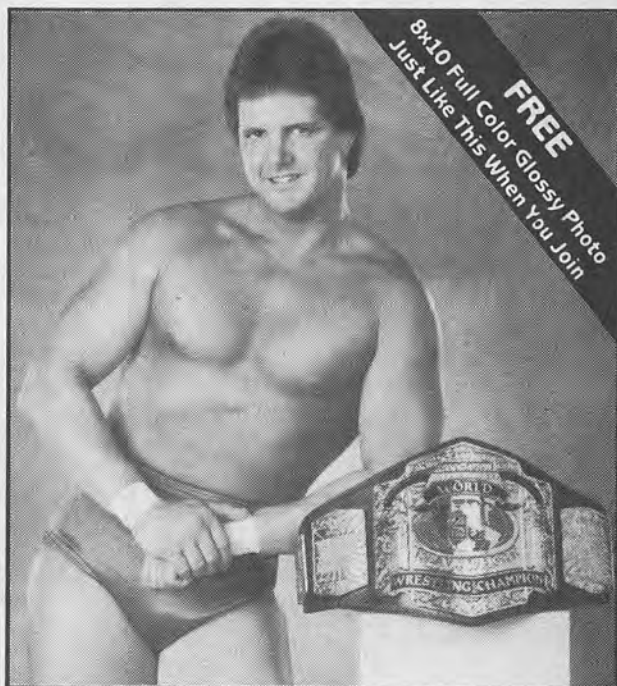
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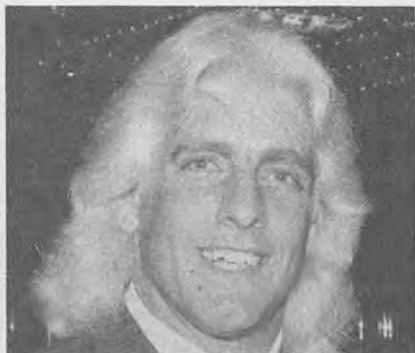
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NEWS FROM THE

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CHICAGO, IL By Shaun C. Broyls



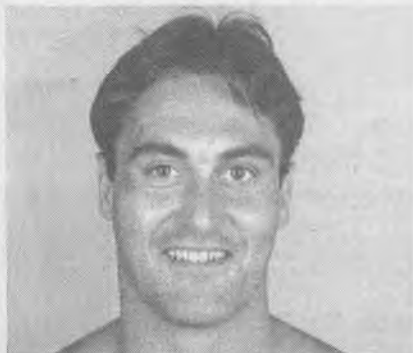
**RIC FLAIR
vs.
DUSTY RHODES**



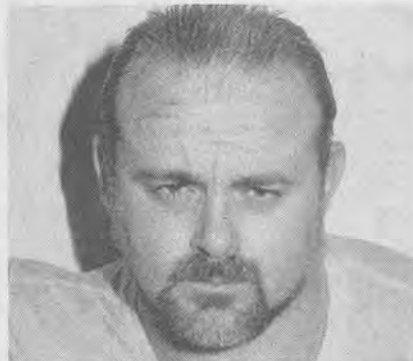
The NWA World champion was determined to put Dusty Rhodes' challenge to rest for the final time. Dusty taunted and teased Flair, but Flair soon took control by throwing Rhodes out of the ring and ramming his head into the press table. Flair then dragged a bloody Rhodes into the ring and applied a figure-four leglock. Rhodes reversed the hold, then got in a brawl with the champion. Flair, sensing defeat, pushed Rhodes into the referee, thereby getting him disqualified.

OTHER BOUTS: The Road Warriors & Nikita Koloff beat Lex Luger, Tully Blanchard, & Arn Anderson ... Rick Rude & Manny Fernandez defeated The Rock 'n' Roll Express ... Ole Anderson beat J.J. Dillon in a bunkhouse match ... Baron Von Raschke defeated Ivan Koloff ... Brad Armstrong beat Konga the Barbarian ... Tully Blanchard defeated Tim Horner.

TAMPA, FL By Daniel L. Willis



**MIKE ROTUNDO
vs.
KEVIN SULLIVAN**



Rotundo, defending his Florida title, controlled most of the match. But Sullivan assumed command by throwing Rotundo out of the ring and stomping on him. Later, Sullivan was disqualified when he hit Rotundo with a chair. Chaos struck when several wrestlers ran into the ring to stop Sullivan, but Kevin continued his onslaught. Kendall Windham joined the attack and battled Sullivan ferociously until order was restored.

OTHER BOUTS: Steve Armstrong & Tracy Smothers defeated Denny Brown & Colt Steele ... Barry and Kendall Windham beat Teijho Khan & The Tahitian Prince ... The M.O.D. Squad destroyed Brady Boone & Mitch Snow ... Ron Simmons defeated The Giant ... Ed Gantner wrecked Bill and Randy Mulkey in a handicap match.

LOS ANGELES, CA By Ted Aguirre



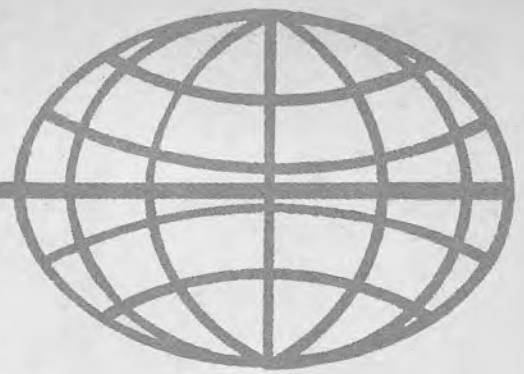
**DAVEY BOY SMITH
vs.
BRETT HART**



Brett Hart came to the ring accompanied by Jimmy Hart and Jim Neidhart, but not Danny Davis. Davey Boy Smith came to the ring with Dynamite Kid and Matilda, their bulldog. When the bell rang, the two men came at each other with everything they had. Davey Boy eventually slammed Hart and pinned him. Neidhart tried to stop the count, but Dynamite prevented him from doing so. Jimmy Hart tried to hit Smith, but his punch had no effect. Just as Davey Boy was about to hit the manager, Davis ran in and knocked Davey Boy to the mat.

OTHER BOUTS: The Can-Am Connection beat Kamala & Sika ... Rick Steamboat defeated Tiger Chung Lee ... Brutus Beefcake put Johnny V out with a sleeper and cut his hair.

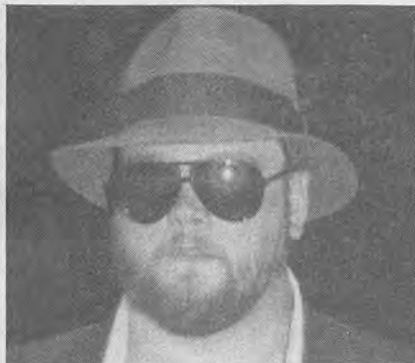
WRESTLING CAPITALS



MUSKOGEE, OK By Norman A. Wilson



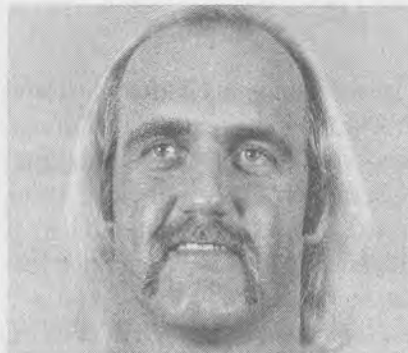
**ONE MAN GANG
vs.
BIG BUBBA ROGERS**



When these two giants met for OMG's UWF championship, it was a brawl from start to end. Early in the match, they both used shoulderblocks, with neither man going down. As the match progressed, OMG got caught in the ropes and was pounded on by Bubba. Gang took Rogers down with a clothesline and dropped an elbow to Bubba's chest, but he missed with a 747 splash from the second rope. Bubba got up, went to the top rope, jumped on OMG, and pinned him for the title.

OTHER BOUTS: Chris Adams & Terry Taylor beat Bob Bradley & The Red Devil ... Steve Cox pinned Super Ninja ... Chavo Guerrero destroyed Mike Boyette ... Rick Steiner & Sting defeated Jeff Raitz & Mike Reed.

RICHFIELD, OH By Jonathan Cohen



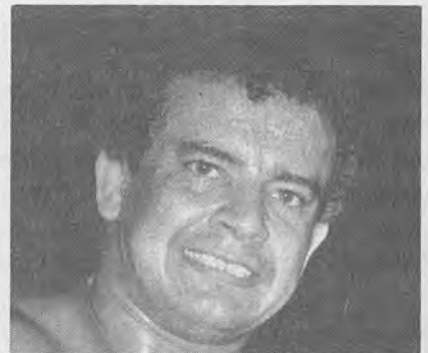
**HULK HOGAN
vs.
HARLEY RACE**



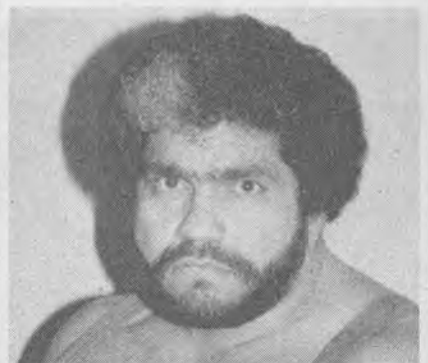
This heavyweight title match started quickly as Race unloaded on WWF champion Hogan with a series of knee-lifts and slams. As the crowd started chanting Hulk's name, the champ threw Race out of the ring. Race landed on his head, but before he could regain his senses was thrown back in by Hogan. Race cut Hogan open with a headbutt, but missed another headbutt off the top rope. Hulk then rolled him up for the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: The Hart Foundation beat The British Bulldogs in a cage match ... Hacksaw Duggan defeated The Iron Sheik ... Kamala beat George Steele by disqualification ... Greg Valentine & Dino Bravo defeated The Rougeaus ... Outlaw Ron Bass beat Pedro Morales ... Brad Rheingans defeated Frenchy Martin ... Outback Jack beat Steve Lombardi.

SAN JUAN, PR By Iser Koricki



**INVADER I
vs.
HERCULES AYALA**



This was a grudge rematch, as several weeks earlier Ayala had broken a chair over Invader's head and then broke Carlos Colon's leg with a figure-four leg-lock. The Invader dominated almost all of the match and applied a figure-four on Ayala, who broke the hold with the help of his manager, Chicky Starr. Ayala used a foreign object on The Invader but couldn't pin him. Both men were counted out as the match degenerated into a bloody brawl.

OTHER BOUTS: Wendi Richter defeated Peggy Lee ... Miguel Perez Jr. beat TNT by disqualification ... Abdullah the Butcher defeated Tony Atlas by DQ ... The Youngbloods beat The Shepherders ... Mighty Igor defeated Jason the Terrible ... Invader III & Hurricane Castillo Jr. beat Bobby Heffernan & El Gran Mendoza.



Matt Brock's **PLAIN SPEAKING**

MEMPHIS, TN: Here's an interesting question: How many people north of the Mason-Dixon line do you think have ever seen a Memphis wrestling match, either live or on TV, or have seen Jerry Lawler wrestle? There are many uninformed people in this country who think that Hulk Hogan is the greatest thing to ever hit wrestling, or that the world revolves around Ric Flair and The Four Horsemen. Well, let me tell you something: I've seen it all, but there isn't an area in the country that's as hot as Memphis is right now. When Jerry Lawler met Austin Idol for the AWA Southern championship down

afterward and saw Lawler get revenge. Believe it or not, he dressed up as a woman, went up to Rich for an autograph, and absolutely beat the stuffings out of him. Feud of the year? One of my early candidates. Hell, if you have the chance to get down to Memphis for a match, do it!

NEW YORK, NY: It's been a long time since I've been back in the big town. Too long. They say that this town is good for a reporter's soul, and I agree. This used to be a big newspaper town, but now only the *New York Times*, *Daily News*, the *New York Post* are still doing business, plus a new kid on the block called *New York Newsday*. The old saloon across the street from the Garden, Toots Shor's, is now an overpriced restaurant, but there are plenty of places around here where a working stiff like myself can grab a few beers after the matches. The Garden is still a great place to work a card, even if it isn't the old Garden. And from what I hear, the new Garden is about to become an old Garden, too. They're planning on knocking it down and moving it a little west of here. Bad move. This place has atmosphere. You can smell the heroes in this place, men like Muhammad Ali and Bruno Sammartino, men who made the Garden great. Time was when you couldn't buy a ticket for the Garden's monthly wrestling cards, but today people are just walking up to the box office and getting pretty good seats. And that's with Hulk Hogan on the card against the old legend, Harley Race. To me this is a dream match; it pits past and current greats. Race still can show the young guy a few moves, although Hogan is much more powerful and won easily. But I think most people here expected Hogan to beat him in seconds. That's not the way it goes with Harley Race. He knows too much. He knows more than Hogan. It's a shame that he's not the Race of old. He would've killed Hogan.



JERRY LAWLER

here in a cage match, they packed the Mid-South Coliseum. For my money, it was the best match I've seen in years. To make a long story short, Lawler lost the match, the title, and his hair when Tommy Rich came out from under the ring (who knows how long he was hiding there?) and helped Idol attacked Lawler. Then, while the barber shaved Lawler's head (it was a hair vs. hair match), Idol and Rich continued to maul Lawler. I came down here a few weeks

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

TOKYO, JAPAN: Stuart M. Saks. Just the mention of the name makes me deathly ill. Peter King had a ring to it. I've known a few people named Peter King in my day, and all of them had some character; some of them were real newspaper people. But I've never met up with a newspaper man named Stuart M. Saks. First of all, a journalist isn't supposed to use a middle initial. Quick. What's Red Smith's middle initial? Case closed. Stuart M. Saks sounds like the name of an accountant or a peanut butter salesman. Anyway, you're probably wondering why I'm getting on the editor-in-chief of this publication. Well, it's Saks who decided that I should go to Japan, although I've been through this a million times. I hate Japan. I love the wrestling in Japan, but I hate the people who populate this country. Saks thought it might be a good idea for me to check out the pro wrestling debut of former sumo wrestler John Tenta of Canada, so I'm here. Here's my report: Tenta teamed with his teacher, Shohei "Giant" Baba. They wrestled Goro Tsurumi and Rusher Kimura. Tenta and Baba won when Kimura was counted out of the ring. Tenta looked okay, but he's still very green. Baba used to be something of a legend, but he's now the most boring wrestler I've ever seen. Now get me out of Japan. I've seen enough.

DAYTONA BEACH, FL: Back in the early 1960s, Eddie and Dr. Jerry Graham formed one of the most feared teams in professional wrestling. The Graham brothers were to the '60s what The Road Warriors are to the '80s. They were a tough, ferocious duo that was virtually unbeatable. I remember Eddie fondly. After the matches, we'd often go out for a few drinks and a quick bite to eat before heading off to the next town. It was only later in his career that the fans started to take Eddie to heart, but the truth was that despite his wrestling style, he was always a good man. It's been a long time since Eddie's been with us, but the people down in Florida still remember. There's an arena down in Orlando called the Eddie Graham Sports Complex, and here in Daytona, they had an Eddie Graham Memo-



EDDIE GRAHAM

rial wrestling card on May 9. Eddie would've like this, because it was a benefit for his favorite charity, the Florida Sherriffs' Boys Ranch and Girls Villa. Eddie was always very dedicated to helping out kids. The card was worthy of Eddie's name, too. Ric Flair beat Dusty Rhodes by disqualification in a good match, and The Road Warriors beat Manny Fernandez and Rick Rude. That was my favorite match, because I could watch Animal and Hawk and imagine that it was Eddie and Jerry. Things really don't change all that much in pro wrestling. After you've been in the sport a few years, you find that wrestlers tend to copy the style of past greats. Eddie Graham was a great. And this was a happy day in Florida because of the way that Eddie was honored. □

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



DON CURTIS

Curtis, who along with Mark Lewin was a heartthrob of female fans in the mid-1960s, is currently living in Jacksonville, Florida, where he is employed by the city, managing the Jacksonville Coliseum. Among his duties is coordinating

various entertainment and sporting events for the arena. He also has earned his jet pilot's license and flies for many corporations. "I still lead a busy life," said Curtis. "Life after wrestling has been fine."



BILL WATTS

After stepping down from his perch as president of UWF/Mid-South Sports, Watts accepted a job as consultant for The Wrestling Network, a Dallas-based television syndication company that works with the UWF and

NWA. He is also a partner in "Tulsa Piper," a aircraft sales and service company based at Jones' Airport in Tulsa, Oklahoma. "I'm also dabbling in real estate," reported Watts. "There's a real challenge there."



FRED BLASSIE

The former great wrestler and manager sold half of his interest in The Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff to Slick and is still advising all three men by telephone on a regular basis. Blassie, whose personal appearances were cut down by re-

cent hip surgery, is living in Westchester County, New York. He is also doing some advisory and public relations work for the WWF. In his spare time, he likes to cook and play golf.



BULLDOG BROWER

Once dubbed the "One Man Riot Squad" because of the long list of opponents he had injured, Brower retired several years ago, citing a lack of competition. Brower keeps in shape while in retire-

ment at his Dover, Delaware, home and is contemplating a return to pro wrestling. "With guys like Hogan, Flair, and Hennig as champions, it would be only a matter of time before I'm back on top," he said.

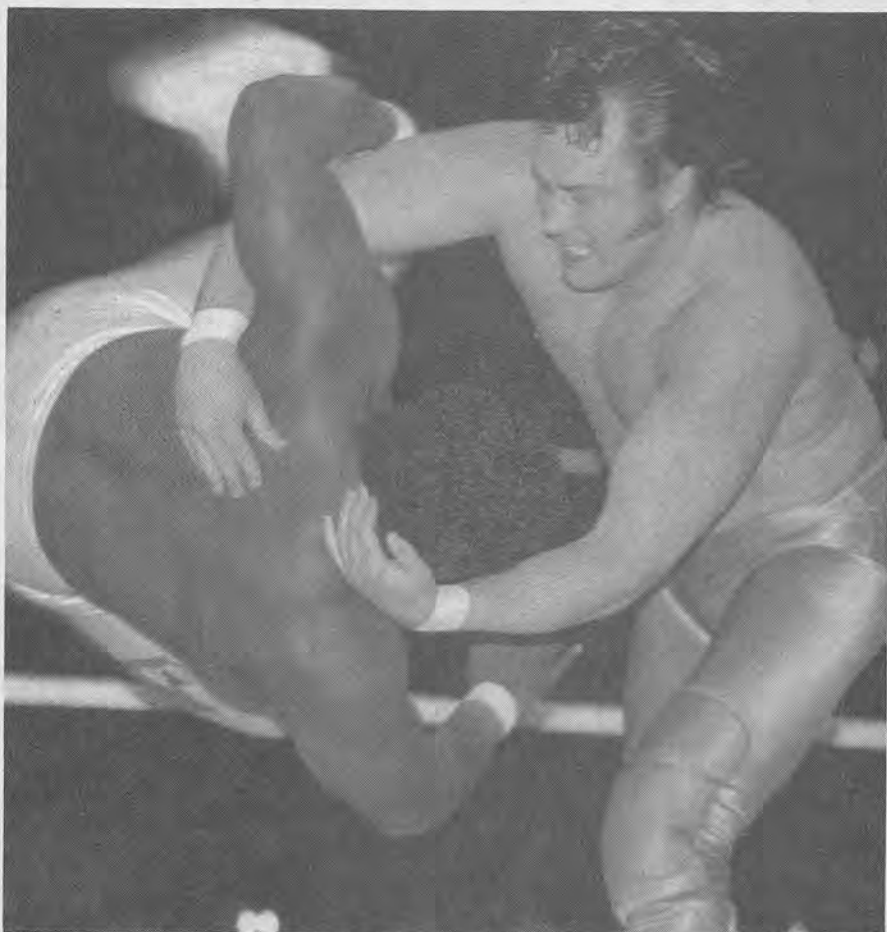
INSIDE WRESTLING

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CAPSULE PROFILE

HE'S NOT ELVIS Presley, he's The Honky Tonk Man (*"The Honky Tonk Man, he loves to rock 'n' roll"*) ... Real name is Wayne Farris, a cousin of Jerry Lawler (*"Lawler don't have any idea what's goin' on"*) ... Began his career in Memphis in 1979 (*"I had to get off the farm"*) ... Former Mid-Southern manager Danny Davis (not the former WWF referee) teamed him with Larry Latham to form The Blond Bombers (*"We did all right, but I was the real star of the team"*) ... Became extremely popular with the fans, who started calling him The Honky Tonk Man (*"The perfect name for the perfect wrestler"*) ... In 1982, moved to Canada, where he adopted the Elvis look (*"I'm a better King of Rock 'n' Roll than Elvis ever was"*) ... Struck up a friendship with "Dr. D" David Shultz (*"Shultz knew how to wrestle, that's for sure"*) ... Dropped out of the sport to work in his girlfriend's father's business (*"You do some crazy things when you're in love"*) ... Two years later, started wrestling again in Tennessee, then in Florida, Portland, and California (*"I had to get back. I needed the action"*) ... Eventually returned to Canada, where he won the North American title (*"That belt was just waitin' for me to win it"*) ... Twice won the International tag team title, first with Ron Starr, then with

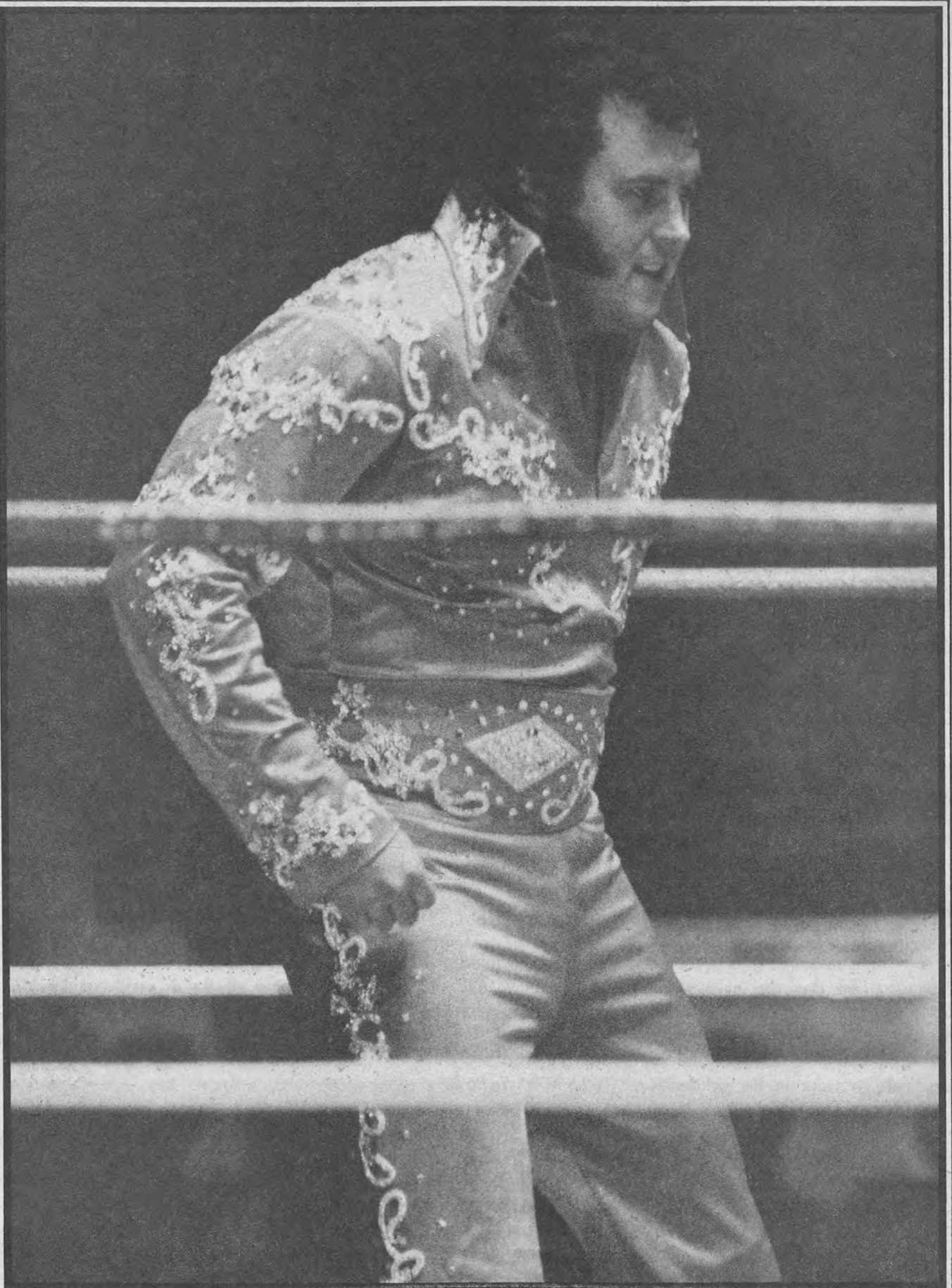
THE HONKY TONK MAN



The Honky Tonk Man flips Koko B. Ware. His bad Elvis impersonation notwithstanding, Honky Tonk is causing trouble for Jake Roberts.

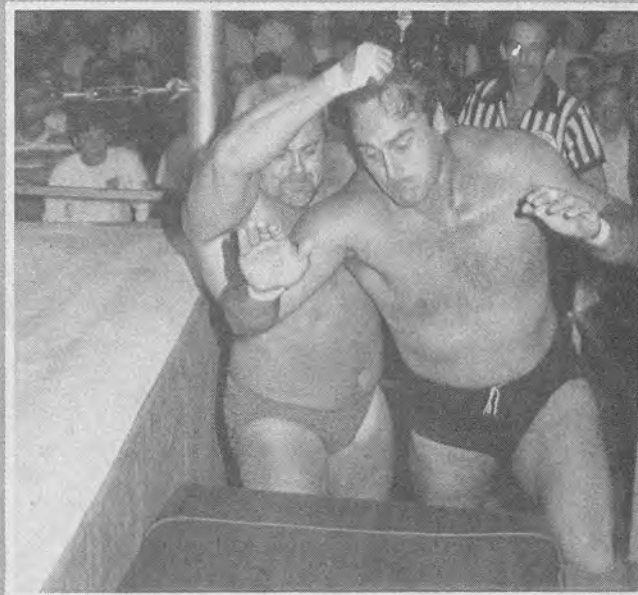
The Cuban Assassin (*"Yeah, they were good partners"*) ... Came to the WWF after Paul Orndorff double-crossed Hulk Hogan (*"Hulk was my friend once. I wanted to help him out"*) ... Received several shots at Randy Savage's Intercontinental belt (*"Give 'Macho Man' credit; he gave me a fair shot"*) ... When fans didn't respond well to him, he asked for a vote of confidence (*"I shook a lot of hands and kissed a lot of babies"*) ... Fans overwhelmingly gave him a thumbs down (*"What do I care? Some of them babies had puke on their mouths"*) ... Disgusted, Honky Tonk took Jimmy Hart as his manager (*"Now he's Col. Jimmy Hart, a man who demands respect"*) ... Perfected

a special move, the "shake, rattle, and roll" (*"When I put that on, there's no way they're gettin' up"*) ... Started coming to the ring with a guitar (*"I'm the best guitar picker in the WWF"*) ... Despite being booed, insists the fans are on his side (*"The people love me. I know they wanna hear me sing"*) ... Began feuding with Jake "The Snake" Roberts when he smashed his guitar over Roberts' head on television (*"That greasy, oily snake was puttin' The Honky Tonk Man down"*) ... Won a tainted victory over Roberts at WrestleMania III (*"There was no doubt about it. I beat the man"*) ... Now recognized as one of the top wrestlers in the WWF (*"It didn't take very long, did it?"*) □



THE HONKY TONK MAN

CAN MIKE ROTUNDO SURVIVE A FEUD WITH KEVIN SULLIVAN?



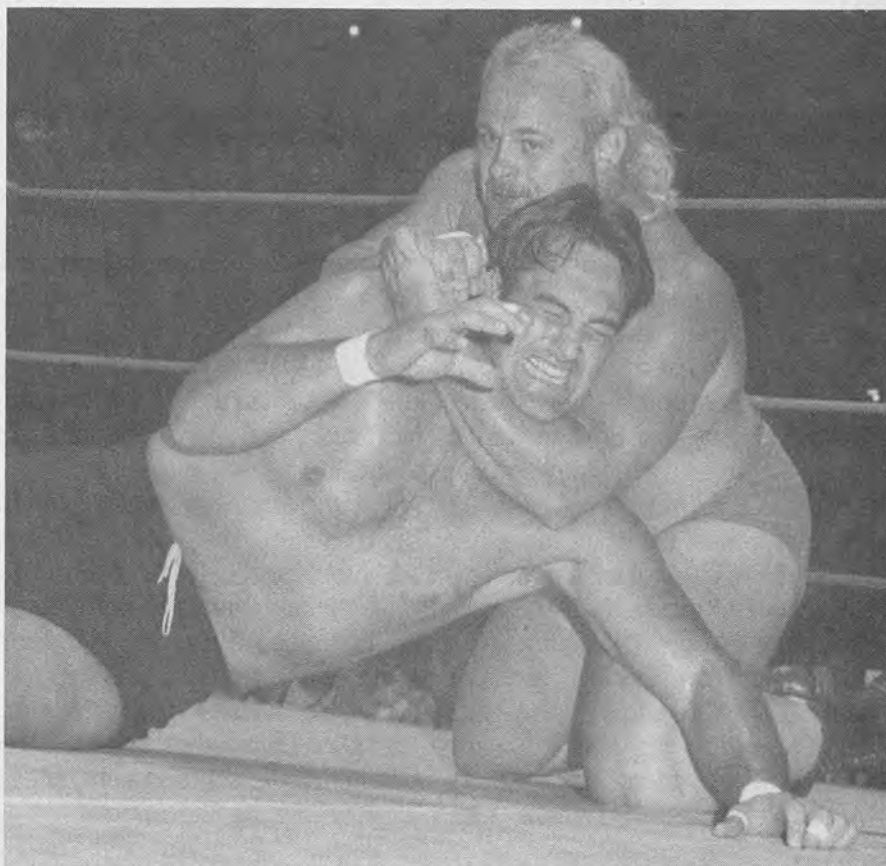
Mike Rotundo is a superb wrestler who has built his reputation on excellence, skill, and fair play. In Kevin Sullivan, however, Rotundo may have come across the one opponent bizarre enough and vicious enough to be capable of ending his career!

MIKE ROTUNDO IS at home today, enjoying a rare day off from the rigors of wrestling. On days like these, he prefers to relax in the Florida sun, perhaps do some gardening, or catch up on chores around the house. Vacation days are few and far between for a pro wrestler, and when one comes along it is cherished.

Rotundo is lying on a beach chair, soaking in the sunshine, and entertaining questions from a reporter. He has earned a reputation among wrestling journalists as one of the most cooperative men in the sport. Today, when he could be doing other things, he is living up to his reputation. He excuses himself for a moment and asks his guest if he would like a cold drink. Rotundo then steps into his kitchen, where he pours two glasses of iced tea and turns on the stereo.

"Nothing like a day in the sun, a cool drink, and good music," says

Photos by Bill Otten



Kevin Sullivan runs Mike Rotundo into the timekeeper's table (top) and chinlocks him (above). Rotundo has never encountered anyone like Sullivan.



Sullivan stomps on Rotundo's face. Not only does Rotundo have to worry about Sullivan, but also Sir Oliver Humperdink, who wants to run him out of the state.

the Florida heavyweight champion. "You know, this is one of the toughest periods of my career with all that's going on here. I remember when me and Barry [Windham] had the WWF tag belts, but the competition wasn't nearly as tough as it is now. It's just nice to have a day off to relax."

Rotundo sits back in his chair and stops speaking for a moment. The sound of the radio fills the air and Rotundo starts mouthing the words to the song being played, a classic Elvis Costello tune: *Oliver's Army is here to stay. Oliver's Army are on their way. And I would rather be anywhere else than here today.*

For a moment, Rotundo doesn't realize what is being played, then

he suddenly shoots up in his chair. He stalks into the house and turns off the radio before going back outside. "Nothing good on the radio today," says a shaken Rotundo. "Anyway, I need peace and quiet, not loud music. I just wanna sit back and forget about the world."

But the connection has already been made. The reporter seizes the moment. "Oliver's Army?" he says. "Sounds familiar, but it's only coincidence. After all, you didn't know what would be playing on the radio. What's the problem?" Rotundo hears the question but doesn't say a word. Finally, after a lengthy silence, he speaks.

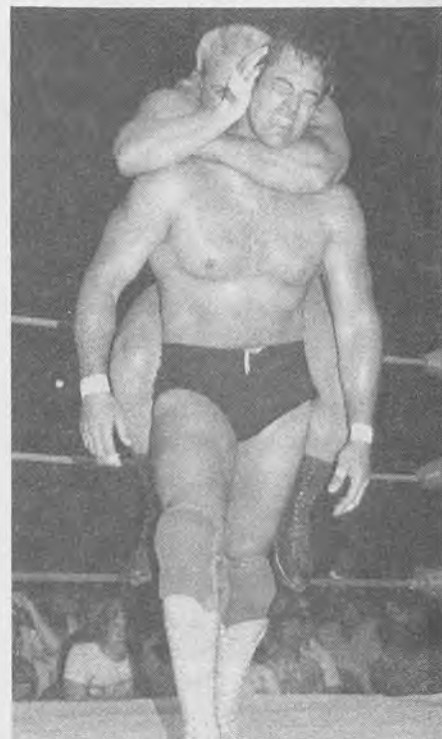
"Listen," Rotundo says to his guest. "I'm the champion and I shouldn't be sitting around on my

butt. If you don't mind, I'm gonna go work out. You're welcome to join me, but it's probably gonna be a while and I don't like to talk while I'm training. Sorry."

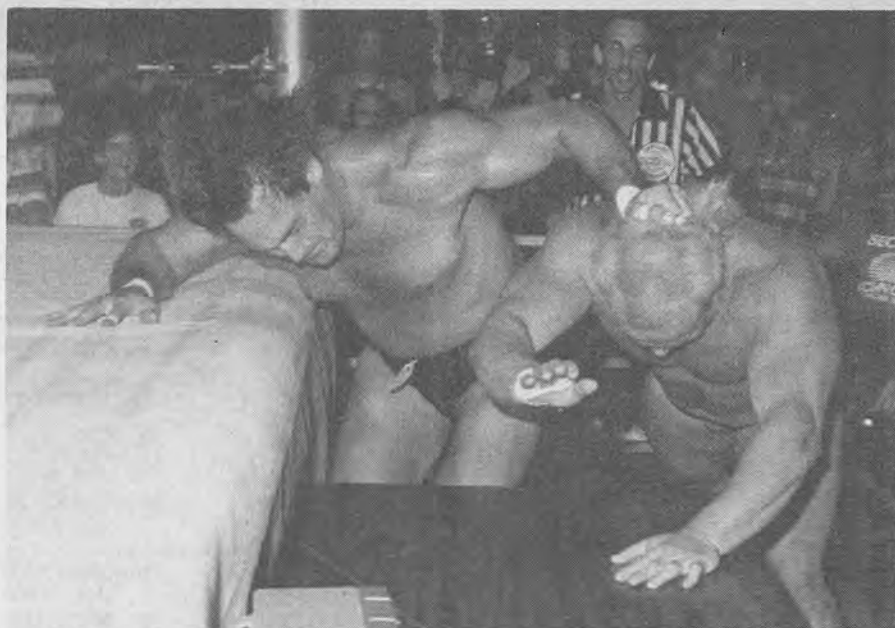
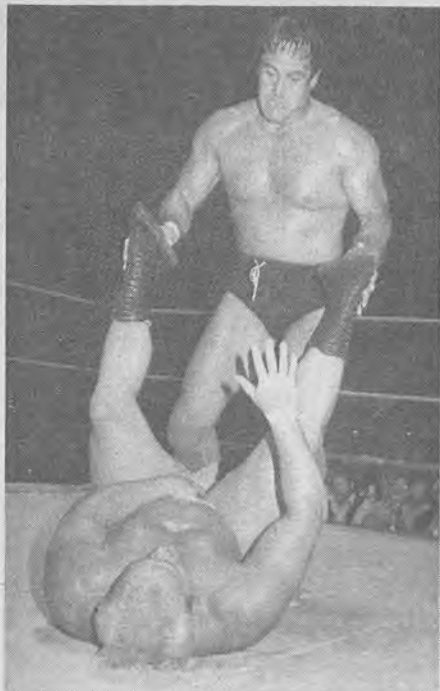
Rotundo is downcast. It's hard to believe that a simple, harmless song could have such an effect on a professional athlete, but Rotundo is in the midst of one of the most violent feuds of his career. His matches against Kevin Sullivan have been more than one-on-one contests. Rotundo has had to deal with Sullivan and Sir Oliver Humperdink's Army. Oliver's Army.

It is the most frightening aspect of Mike Rotundo's vicious feud with Kevin Sullivan, a feud which has raged in arenas throughout Florida. When Rotundo wrestles Sullivan, clouds of doom hover above the Sunshine State. And the forecast for this feud is not any brighter: continued violence throughout the year, with occasional broken bones and showers of blood. And for Rotundo, some predict, no chance of reign.

The reason is simple. Sullivan has ended the careers of several

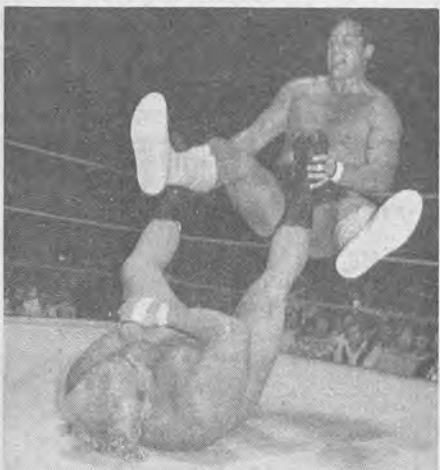


Sullivan attacks Rotundo from behind. The champion knows he'll have to work harder than ever to keep his title.



Rotundo stretches Sullivan's legs (left) and rams his head into the table (above). The devious Sullivan says he knows hundreds of ways to hurt men like Rotundo.

wrestlers. He has sent countless others scurrying for cover in other areas. Sullivan has sounded his warning many times: "I don't set



Rotundo hits Sullivan with a legdrop (above). Even Sullivan has his fans, as Rotundo can see when he enters the ring (below).

out to defeat my opponents," he says. "I set out to destroy my opponents. When I'm through with them, they never want to wrestle again, and I make it so they couldn't, even if they wanted to."

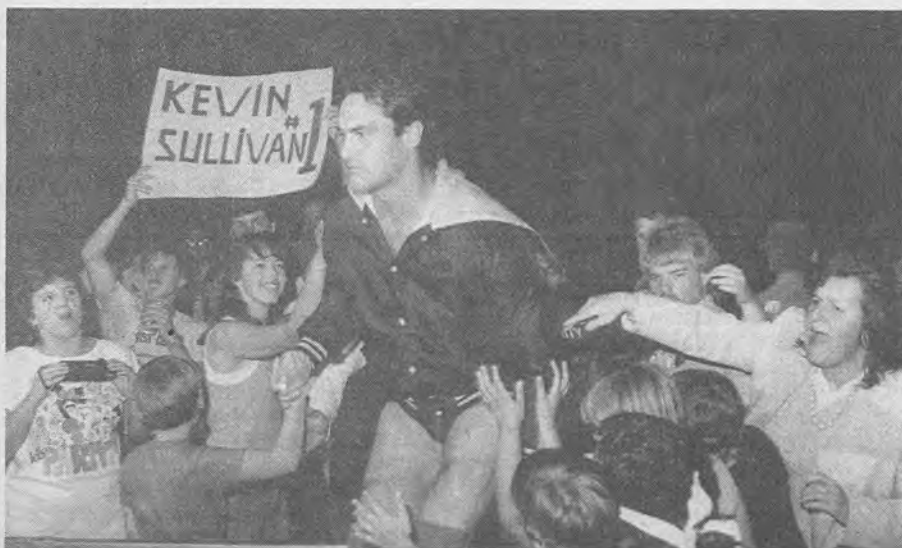
And Humperdink only makes Sullivan more imposing. Although his Army is constantly changing, Humperdink is never at a loss for talented, fearsome men. When Ed Gantner decided to leave the Army, Humperdink added Dory Funk Jr. The Tahitian Prince, another Humperdink man, has emerged as one of the most talented individuals in Florida. He is the son of Samoan Afa, which means

that he has a natural thirst for blood.

Humperdink has declared war on Rotundo. "I have already succeeded in getting rid of Windham and [Lex] Luger," said Humperdink. "Now, I have set my sights on Rotundo and I will not fail. Sir Oliver Humpderdink never fails. I own the most impressive stable of wrestlers in the sport. Rotundo is a fool to take us on. He won't even get past Sullivan."

Rotundo has been aided recently by Gantner, a huge, well-built individual who is well-schooled in Humperdink's ways. There are those who think that Rotundo has only survived this long as Florida champion because of Gantner's input. But how long can that last? Sullivan will do virtually anything to defeat Rotundo, no matter how illegal or immoral. Sullivan follows no rules. He has no morals. Rotundo knows this.

"It's a constant battle," Rotundo admits. "The war won't be over until one of us gets rid of the other, and then I'll have Humperdink's men to deal with. But nobody ever said that being champion is easy. There's always somebody out there who wants to take your title. I just have to deal with it." □



INSIDE WRESTLING'S OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 3—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

- 4—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 5—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 6—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 7—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL

- 8—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 9—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
- 10—**WENDELL COOLEY**
220, Milton, FL
- 11—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

- 12—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 13—**BUBBA ROGERS**
348, Louisville, KY
- 14—**HARLEY RACE**
258, Kansas City, MO
- 15—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA

NWA

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**MAGNUM T.A.**
245, Chesapeake, VA
- 3—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX

- 4—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX
- 5—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 6—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 7—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL

- 8—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 9—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Atlanta, GA
- 10—**RONNIE GARVIN**
231, Montreal, Quebec
- 11—**RIP OLIVER**
245, Tampa, FL

- 12—**CARLOS COLON**
246, Bayamon, Puerto Rico
- 13—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
252, Boston, MA
- 14—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 15—**IVAN KOLOFF**
240, Moscow, Russia

AWA

- 1—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**NICK BOCKWINKEL**
245, Beverly Hills, CA
- 3—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN

- 4—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 5—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
- 6—**JIMMY SNUKA**
251, Fiji Islands
- 7—**D.J. PETERSEN**
245, St. Joseph, MO

- 8—**LEON WHITE**
375, Denver, CO
- 9—**KEVIN KELLY**
271, Oakland, CA
- 10—**BORIS ZUKHOV**
254, Leningrad, Russia
- 11—**SUPER NINJA**
263, Japan

- 12—**MR. SAITO**
247, Japan
- 13—**KEN TIMBS**
240, Hollywood, CA
- 14—**JERRY BLACKWELL**
474, Stone Mountain, GA
- 15—**JERRY LAWLER**
234, Memphis, TN

WWF

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI
- 3—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL

- 4—**HARLEY RACE**
258, Kansas City, MO
- 5—**HERCULES HERNANDEZ**
265, Tampa, FL
- 6—**BILLY JACK HAYNES**
245, Portland, OR
- 7—**KEN PATERA**
245, Portland, OR

- 8—**ONE MAN GANG**
468, Chicago, IL
- 9—**THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN
- 10—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
273, San Francisco, CA
- 11—**KOKO B. WARE**
229, Union City, TN

- 12—**COWBOY BOB ORTON**
245, Tampa, FL
- 13—**KAMALA**
402, Uganda
- 14—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO
- 15—**ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France

MOST POPULAR

- 1—**HULK HOGAN**
305, Venice Beach, CA
- 2—**BARRY WINDHAM**
236, Sweetwater, TX
- 3—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

- 4—**DUSTY RHODES**
302, Austin, TX
- 5—**NIKITA KOLOFF**
275, Moscow, Russia
- 6—**KEVIN VON ERICH**
239, Denton, TX
- 7—**KEN PATERA**
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- 12—**JIM GARVIN**
235, Tampa, FL
- 13—**CHRIS ADAMS**
228, Stratford on Avon, England
- 14—**WENDELL COOLEY**
220, Milton, FL
- 15—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE**
273, San Francisco, CA

MOST HATED

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis
- 2—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 3—**TULLY BLANCHARD**
235, San Antonio, TX

- 4—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL
- 5—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 6—**EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 7—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV

- 8—**DANNY DAVIS**
220, Dover, NH
- 9—**DICK MURDOCH**
270, Waxahachie, TX
- 10—**BRIAN ADIAS**
238, Denton, TX
- 11—**TOMMY RICH**
242, Hendersonville, TN

- 12—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
239, Boston, MA
- 13—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 14—**HARLEY RACE**
258, Kansas City, MO
- 15—**BIG BUBBA ROGERS**
348, Louisville, KY

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
No. 2 contenders to AWA and NWA World tag titles
- 2—**MANNY FERNANDEZ & RICK RUDE**
NWA World tag team champions
- 3—**BRETT HART & JIM NEIDHART**
WWF World tag team champions
- 4—**THE CAN-AM CONNECTION**
No. 1 contenders to WWF World tag team title
- 5—**THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS**
U.S. tag team champions

- 6—**TIM HORNER & BRAD ARMSTRONG**
UWF tag team champions
- 7—**THE ROCK 'N' ROLL EXPRESS**
No. 1 contenders to NWA World tag team title
- 8—**THE FANTASTICS**
World Class tag team champions
- 9—**STEVE KEIRN & MIKE GRAHAM**
Florida tag team champions
- 10—**BORIS ZUKHOV & STANISLAUS USTINOV**
AWA World tag team champions

- 11—**THE SUPERPOWERS**
No. 3 contenders to NWA tag team title
- 12—**THE SHEPHERDERS**
No. 1 contenders to Florida tag team title
- 13—**AUSTIN IDOL & TOMMY RICH**
No. 1 contenders to AWA Southern tag team title
- 14—**ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN**
Southeast Continental tag team champions
- 15—**BRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN**
Calgary International tag team champions

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler . . . "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices . . . Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue . . . The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place .

For period ended May 29, 1987

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALABAMA CHAMPION: MR. WRESTLING II

(April 27, 1987; from Mike Golden; Birmingham, AL)

ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

SUPER STRONG MACHINE & ASHURA HARA

(October 30, 1986; from Takashi Ishikawa & Mighty Inoue; Aomori, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: JUMBO TSURUTA

(October 21, 1986; from Stan Hansen; Tokyo)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ROAD WARRIORS

(March 12, 1987; from Jumbo Tsuruta & Genichiro Tenryu; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MASANOBU FUCHI

(January 3, 1987; from Kuniaki Kobayashi; Tokyo)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: GENICHIRO TENRYU

(April 26, 1986; tournament final over Ted DiBiase; Omiya, Japan)

ALL-PACIFIC WOMEN'S CHAMPION: LELANI KAI

(August 21, 1986; from Chika; Tokyo, Japan)

AWA SOUTHERN CHAMPION: AUSTIN IDOL

(April 27, 1987; from Jerry Lawler; Memphis, TN)

AWA INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: CHICK DONOVAN

(April 20, 1987; from Soul Train Jones; Memphis, TN)

* AWA INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND

(May 9, 1987; from Steve Keim & Mark Starr; Memphis, TN)

* AWA SOUTHERN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JACK HART & CHICK DONOVAN

(May 4, 1987; from Rocky Johnson & Soul Train Jones; Memphis, TN)

AWA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP: SHERRI MARTEL

(June 28, 1986; from Candi Divine; Oakland, CA)

* AWA WORLD CHAMPION: CURT HENNIG

(May 2, 1987; from Nick Bockwinkel; San Francisco, CA)

* AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BORIS ZUKHOV & STANISLAUS USTINOV

(May 25, 1987; from The Midnight Rockers; Lake Tahoe, NV)

BAHAMAS CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Bad News Allen)

BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION: OWEN HART

(October 25, 1986; from Les Thornton; Edmonton, Alberta)

CALGARY NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP: OWEN HART

(April 10, 1987; from Makhzan Singh; Calgary, Alberta)

CALGARY INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

BRUCE HART & BRIAN PILLMAN

(April 6, 1987; tournament final over Ron Starr & Cuban Assassin; Calgary, Alberta)

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER

(February 22, 1987; from Hercules Ayala; Montreal, Quebec)

CANADIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PRETTY BOY SIMMES & RICHARD CHARLAND

(April 13, 1987; from Dan Kroffat & Armand Rougeau; Montreal, Quebec)

* CENTRAL STATES CHAMPION: RUFUS R. JONES

(May 21, 1987; from Bulldog Bob Brown; Kansas City, KS)

CENTRAL STATES TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Ken Timbs & Porkchop Cash)

ENGLISH MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION: FLYING FUJI YAMATA

(March 3, 1987; from The Black Tiger; Croydon, England)

FLORIDA CHAMPION: MIKE ROTUNDO

(April 18, 1987; over Sir Oliver Humperdink; Lakeland, FL)

FLORIDA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVE KEIRN & MIKE GRAHAM

(April 17, 1987; from The M.O.D. Squad; Daytona Beach, FL)

INTERNATIONAL WRESTLING GRAND PRIX CHAMPION: ANTONIO INOKI

(June 19, 1986; tournament final over Dick Murdoch; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

AKIRA MAEDA & NOBUHIKO TAKADA

(March 26, 1987; from Keiji Mutoh & Shiro Koshinaka; Osaka, Japan)

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHIRO KOSHINAKA

(September 19, 1986; from Nobuhiko Takada; Fukuoka, Japan)

JAPANESE WOMEN'S CHAMPION: YUKARI OMORI

(August 23, 1986; from Devil Masami; Kawasaki, Japan)

JAPANESE WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KZUE NAGAHORI & UMY MIOGURA

(April 27, 1987; from Yumiko Hotta & Hisako Uno; Tokyo, Japan)

* MID-AMERICA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JEFF JARRETT

(May 11, 1987; from Moondog Spot; Memphis, TN)

NWA JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: LAZOR-TRON

(March 7, 1987; from Denry Brown; Atlanta, GA)

NWA SIX-MAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE ROAD WARRIORS & DUSTY RHODES

(May 17, 1986; from Ivan & Nikita Koloff and Baron Von Raschke; Baltimore)

NWA TV CHAMPION: TULLY BLANCHARD

(November 27, 1986; from Dusty Rhodes; Greensboro, NC)

NWA WORLD CHAMPION: RIC FLAIR

(August 9, 1986; from Dusty Rhodes; St. Louis)

NWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MANNY FERNANDEZ & RICK RUDE

(December 6, 1986; from The Rock 'n' Roll Express; Atlanta)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPION: RIP OLIVER

(April 18, 1987; from Ricky Santana; Portland, OR)

* PACIFIC NORTHWEST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MIKE MILLER & COCOA SAMOA

(May 23, 1987; from Rip Oliver & Art Crews; Portland, OR)

PWF CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(April 24, 1987; tournament final over Hiroshi Wajima; Yokohama, Japan)

PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STAN HANSEN & TED DIBIASE

(as mandated by PWF wrestling officials)

SOUTHEAST CHAMPION: DUTCH MANTEL

(April 13, 1987; from Exotic Adrian Street; Birmingham, AL)

SOUTHEAST CONTINENTAL CHAMPION: WENDELL COOLEY

(April 27, 1987; from Buddy Landell; Birmingham, AL)

* SOUTHEAST CONTINENTAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN

(May 25, 1987; from Jerry Stubbs & Tony Anthony; Birmingham, AL)

* SOUTHEAST U.S. JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SCOTT ARMSTRONG

(May 25, 1987; from Tom Pritchard; Birmingham, AL)

U.S. CHAMPION: NIKITA KOLOFF

(August 17, 1986; best-of-seven final over Magnum T.A.; Charlotte, NC)

(September 28, 1986; unification victory over National heavyweight champion

Wahoo McDaniel; Atlanta, GA)

* U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE MIDNIGHT EXPRESS

(May 16, 1987; tournament final over Barry Windham & Ronnie Garvin)

UWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DIAMOND TIMOTHY FLOWERS

(April 3, 1987; from Billy Two Eagles; Vancouver, British Columbia)

* UWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: J.R. BUNDY & RICK DAVIS

(May 9, 1987; from Jonathan Sayers & Diamond Timothy Flowers; Vancouver, British Columbia)

UWF HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: BIG BUBBA ROGERS

(April 19, 1987; over One Man Gang; Muskogee, OK)

* UWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRAD ARMSTRONG & TIM HORNER

(May 17, 1987; from Sting & Rick Steiner; Tulsa, OK)

UWF TV CHAMPION: EDDIE GILBERT

(March 8, 1987; from Savannah Jack; Tulsa, OK)

WORLD CLASS CHAMPION: KEVIN VON ERICH

(October 12, 1986; from Black Bart; Dallas, TX)

WORLD CLASS SIX-MAN CHAMPIONS: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Kevin, Lance, and Mike Von Erich)

* WORLD CLASS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE FANTASTICS

(May 4, 1987; over RPMs to fill vacancy; Ft. Worth, TX)

* WORLD CLASS TV CHAMPION: TONY ATLAS

(May 22, 1987; reinstated by World Class officials)

* WORLD CLASS TEXAS CHAMPION: DINGO WARRIOR

(May 25, 1987; reinstated by World Class officials)

WORLD PACIFIC CHAMPION: SUPERFLY TUI

(April 11, 1987; from Super Machine I; Honolulu, HI)

WORLD PACIFIC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: FARMER BOY IPO & LEROY BROWN

(August 9, 1986; from Mad Max & Super Max; Honolulu, HI)

WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPION: THE FABULOUS MOOLAH

(November 25, 1985; from Wendi Richter; New York)

WORLD WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LELANI KAI & JUDY MARTIN

(August 1985; from Desiree Petersen & Velvet McIntyre; Egypt)

* WWC JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: INVADER III

(May 3, 1987; from Frank Lancaster; Aguadilla, Puerto Rico)

* WWC NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: TNT

(May 16, 1987; from Miguel Perez Jr.; Bayamon, Puerto Rico)

WWC NORTH AMERICAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

TONY ATLAS & MIGUEL PEREZ JR.

(April 25, 1987; from Bob Heffernan & El Gran Mendoza; Caguas, Puerto Rico)

WWC PUERTO RICAN CHAMPION: MIGHTY IGOR

(January 9, 1987; from Al Perez; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

* WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: CHRIS & MARK YOUNGBLOOD

(May 10, 1987; from The Shepherders; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: CARLOS COLON

(September 21, 1986; tournament final over Terry Funk; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: RICK STEAMBOAT

(March 29, 1987; from Randy Savage; Pontiac, MI)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: HULK HOGAN

(January 23, 1984; from The Iron Sheik; New York, NY)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BRETT HART & JIM NEIDHART

(January 26, 1987; from The British Bulldogs; Tampa, FL)

HULK HOGAN DEFEATS HARLEY RACE

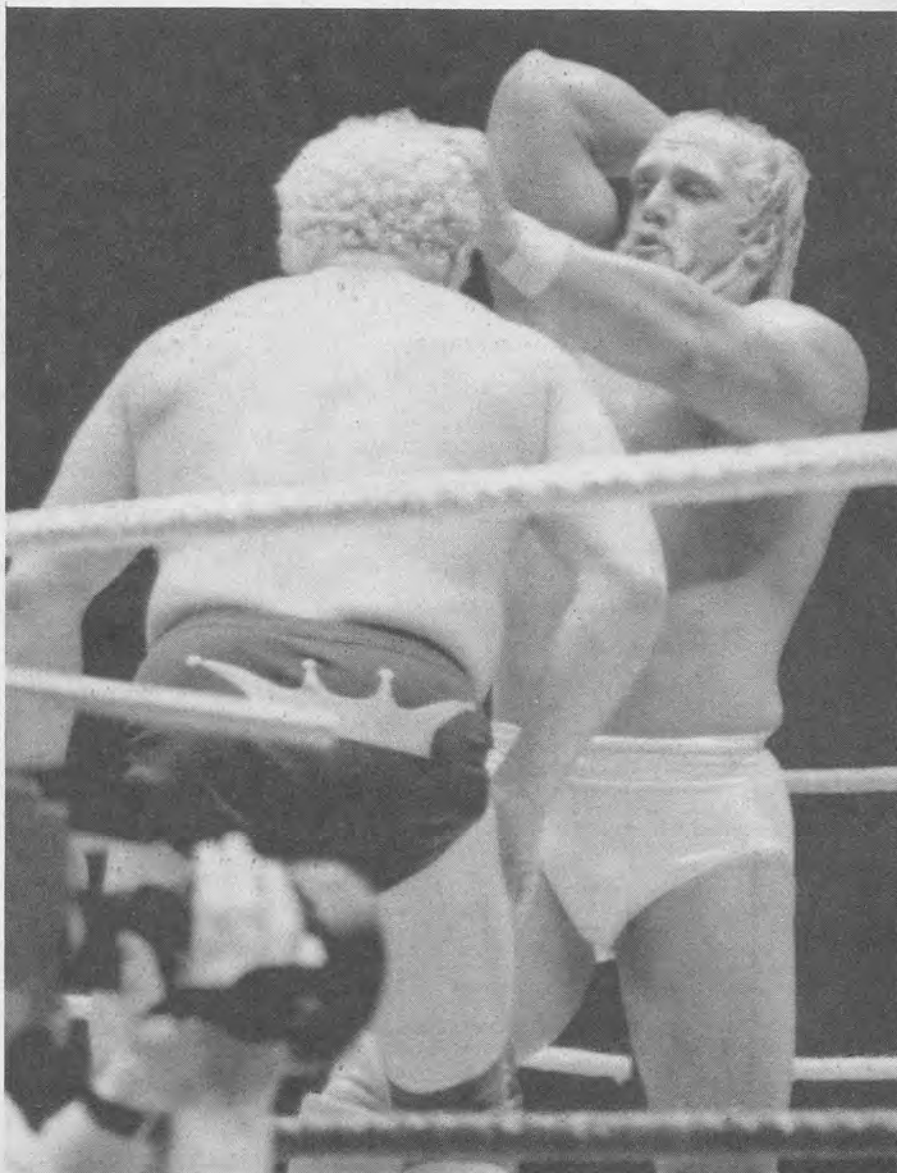
How Fate Took The Greatness Out Of This Violent Feud

Their war today is memorable—but what if Hulk Hogan and Harley Race had feuded when both men were deep in their prime? But for an unforgiving calendar wrestling fans are denied the match of a century!

IN LIVING ROOMS and dens and schoolyards and lunchrooms across the country, the eternal debate rages: Who was better? Ali or Louis? Could Chamberlain have taken Kareem? Would Cousy have out-dribbled Jordan? Could the Babe have powdered one off of Roger Clemens? Would the '68 Packers have trounced the '86 Bears?

Time disarms the most rational sports fan. It creates the perfect vehicle for argument—arguments that can never be solved. Ali might have knocked Joe Louis out in the

WWF World champion Hulk Hogan elbow-smashes Harley Race, a former seven-time NWA titlist. In his prime, Race would have given "The Hulkster" a much tougher challenge.



Photos by David Fitzgerald

first round; then again, maybe not. Computer simulations of such matchups may fuel conjecture, but the sports fan knows better. Sports encompasses too many intangibles to be solved like a math problem.

Most frustrating for the sports debater is the occasion where there's a brief overlapping of two superstars from successive generations. Julius Erving and Michael Jordan. Chamberlain and Kareem. Larry Holmes and Mike Tyson. Comparing the eroding skills of an aging great to the barely polished tools of an up-and-comer may be fun; ultimately, though, it's an exercise in futility.

In the WWF, a feud is currently taking place between two of professional wrestling's all-time greats. Yet it would be wrong to label the current battles between Harley Race and Hulk Hogan as great, though the temptation do to so is strong.

Years ago, when Race was racking up NWA titles like a pro bowler knocks over pins, he took on the challenge of a young, awkward Hogan. The youngster gave a good accounting of himself, his tremendous size and strength masking a shortage of skills. In the end he was no match. Race pinned him, as he did all others, on his way to establishing his tremendous legend.

Today, Hogan, arguably in the prime of his career, is defeating Race at every stop along the WWF circuit. "The King," as Race enjoys being called, appears to be wrestling from sheer memory. A memory as old, as some say, as the hills.

"It's the nature of all things, not only sports," says legendary WWF manager Capt. Lou Albano. "In sports, the fall from grace is always keener because the participants are young, talented, and intense. Could The Mongols, my first tag team champions, have beaten The British Bulldogs, my last? No one knows. That's what makes sports



Race puts Hogan down with a sleeper (above). The champion backflips Race in a 1983 encounter (below). At the time, Race was nearing the end of his final title reign and Hogan was just beginning to show signs of greatness. Today, Hogan is simply too powerful for the self-proclaimed King.



so controversial.

"What's unnerving about Race and Hogan is the feud they had years ago. They avoided each other's primes. Race is one of those ageless competitors, which is why he's still kicking after all these years. But he's too old for Hogan.

Not even Race can meet that challenge."

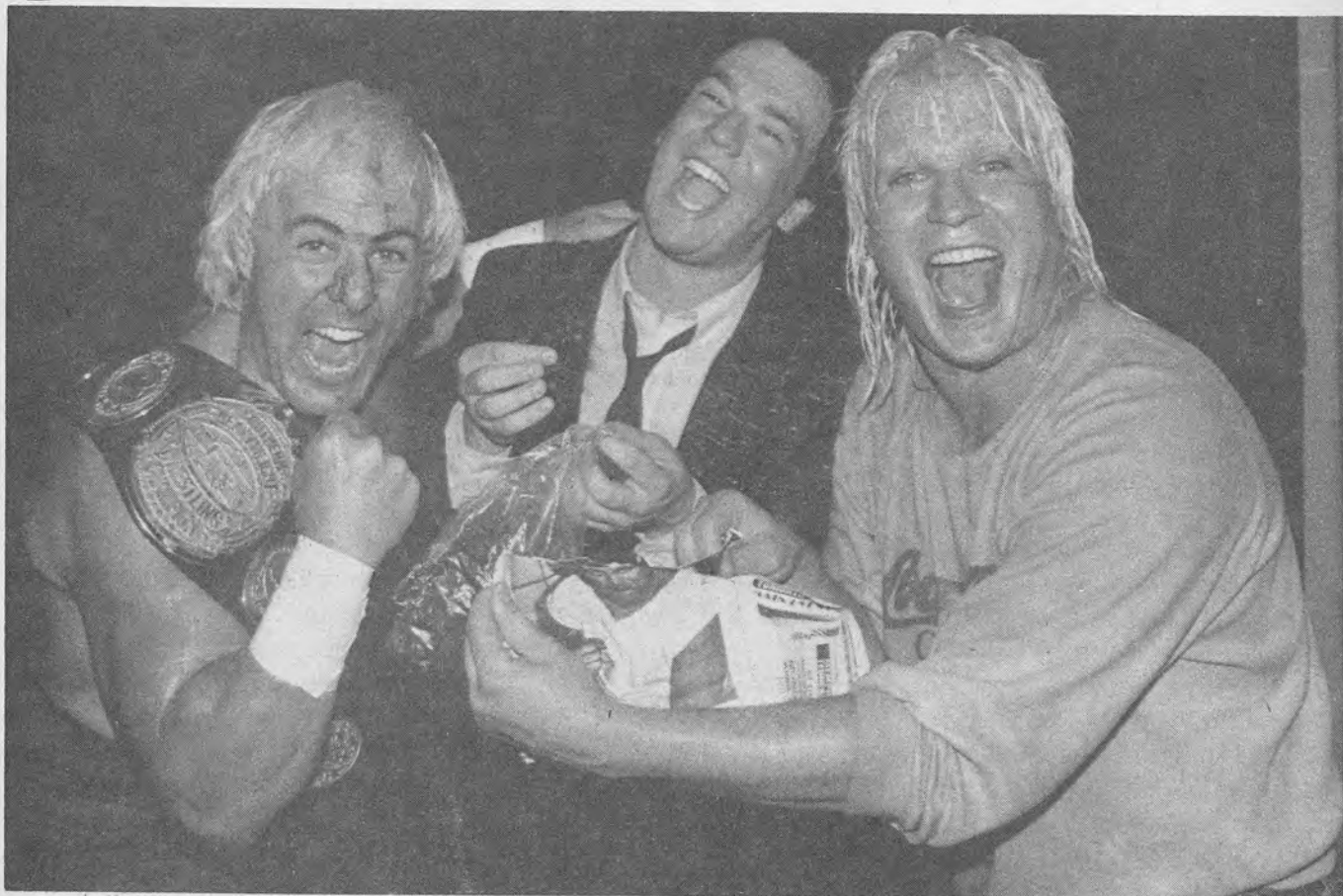
Indulging the debate is tempting. Had these two met in their primes, it may well have been the match of the century. In an informal straw poll conducted by *Inside Wrestling*, seven out of 10 "experts" gave Race the nod in a hypothetical match.

"In his prime, Race would crush Hogan," claims NWA champion Ric Flair. "I'll be damned to credit any man who doesn't deserve it, but there were plenty of times when Harley Race was one tough customer. To win the NWA World title seven times is a tremendous achievement. I don't care how big and bad Hulk Hogan is, Race in his prime would have sent him to the showers in under 10 minutes. Of course, I could do so in five."

One of Flair's archrivals, "The American Dream" Dusty Rhodes, agrees with the NWA champion. "I'm not ashamed to say I've learned a lot watching Harley Race over the years," Dusty says. "His tenacity is what separates him from most other wrestlers. He has all the

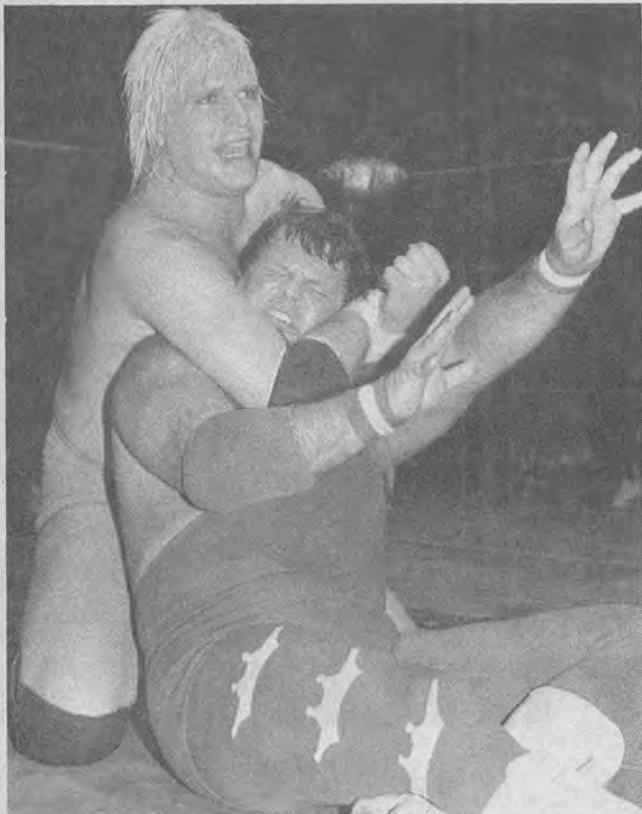
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HATED . . . & LOVING IT!

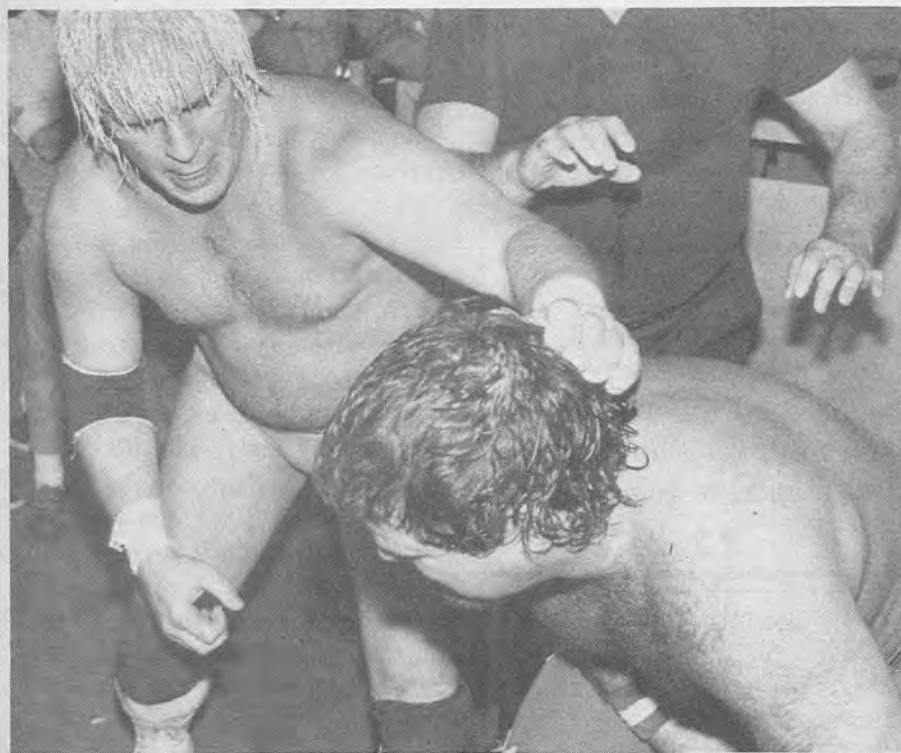
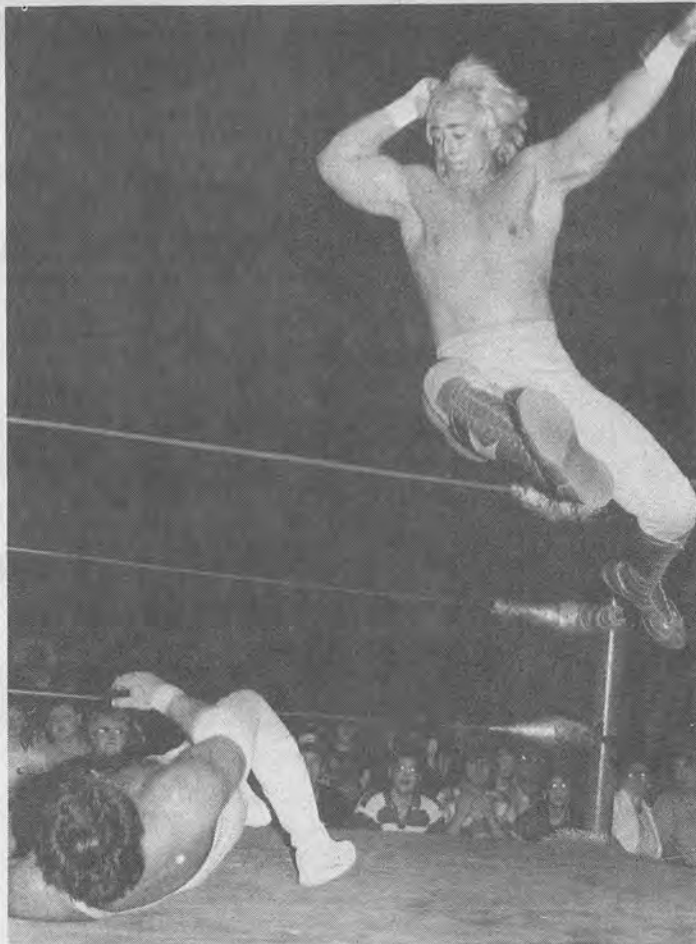


Austin Idol & Tommy Rich Declare Themselves Kings Of Memphis!

With just a few snips of the barber's scissors, Jerry Lawler had lost not only his hair and his AWA Southern title, but also his dominance over Mid-Southern wrestling. Tommy Rich and Austin Idol have declared themselves the new kings of Memphis, but they are finding that the kingdom is not full of loyal subjects



Austin Idol, his manager Paul Dangerly, and Tommy Rich gleefully display a bag full of Jerry Lawler's hair (opposite page). Rich facelocks Lawler (above), Lawler rolls out of the way of an Idol elbowsmash (right), and Rich and Lawler fight outside the ring (below).



"YOU KNOW WHAT they say—hair today, gone tomorrow! *Hahaha!* 'The King' is dead, brother, long live the kings!"

Tommy Rich was gloating, but who would deny him the privilege?

One week earlier, he and Austin Idol had perpetrated one of the biggest outrages in the history of Memphis wrestling. During a hair vs. hair cage match between Idol and Jerry Lawler, Rich climbed out from under

the ring (he'd been hiding there since the middle of the afternoon!) and joined Idol in beating up on "The King."

Lawler had no chance and was pinned. He lost the AWA Southern title, and as per the stipulations of the match, his bushy head of hair was shaved down to a crewcut. The hair would grow back, of course, but the humiliation would burn inside Lawler—until he got revenge.

Revenge did come, not against Rich and Idol, but against the two managers involved in the affair: Paul Dangerly and Downtown Bruno. In a tag match pitting Rich and Idol against Bill Dundee and Rocky Johnson, Dundee was about to get his head shaved when a masked man who looked suspiciously like Lawler ran into the ring. He threw fire in Dangerly's face and shaved Bruno's head; somehow, Rich and Idol managed to escape.

"That shows you how scared Lawler is," Rich said. "He had his

(Continued on page 50)

HOTSEAT

EDDIE GILBERT

"I'M DEDICATING MY LIFE TO THE UWF TITLE!"

THE FOLLOWING SITUATION helps reveal Eddie Gilbert's strange personality:

In a singles match, Terry Taylor had just brutalized his ex-best friend and tag team partner, Chris Adams, and was being interviewed by UWF commentator Magnum T.A. Taylor told T.A. that he was sick of being a nice guy and was through with Adams.

Out came Gilbert, who has always had a deep hatred for Taylor. It appeared as if there might be an altercation between the two men. Instead, Gilbert told Taylor that he admired his new style and would like to manage him. Taylor refused, but the point was made.

Eddie Gilbert has chutzpah. Unmitigated gall. Incredible boldness. Nothing embarrasses him. He is an amazing individual.

But he gets places. Last summer, Gilbert and Sting defeated The Fantastics, a team thought to be far superior, for the UWF title. They eventually lost the title, but earlier this year, Sting and Steiner (under Gilbert's management) defeated Adams and Taylor for the belts. They've since lost them to Brad Armstrong and Tim Horner in a match that brought out bad feelings

between Gilbert and Sting.

Recently, Gilbert decided to stop managing and stick to wrestling. He hired Dick Murdoch as his coach/adviser and set his sights on Bubba Rogers' UWF title. Gilbert spoke about these and other developments in a most interesting "Hotseat" interview with Associate Editor Dave Rosenbaum in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

“

A month ago I was a manager. Three or four months ago I was a manager and a wrestler. Now I'm a wrestler, and I'm going places.

”

Q: First question, Eddie: How's Missy?

A: You'd like to know, wouldn't you Rosenbaum?

Q: Well, she is a beautiful young woman, although she seems to be a little misdirected at times. It didn't take much time for her to decide that the WWF wasn't for her, did it?

A: You can think what you want, but

I think she just missed her man. You know, they don't call me "Hot Stuff" for nothing, and . . .

Q: You're happy to have her back?

A: Of course I'm happy to have her back. Who wouldn't be? Just look at her, she's the most beautiful woman in the world.

Q: Your loyalty is admirable. It doesn't fit your character.

A: What the heck are you talking about? I'm as loyal as can be.

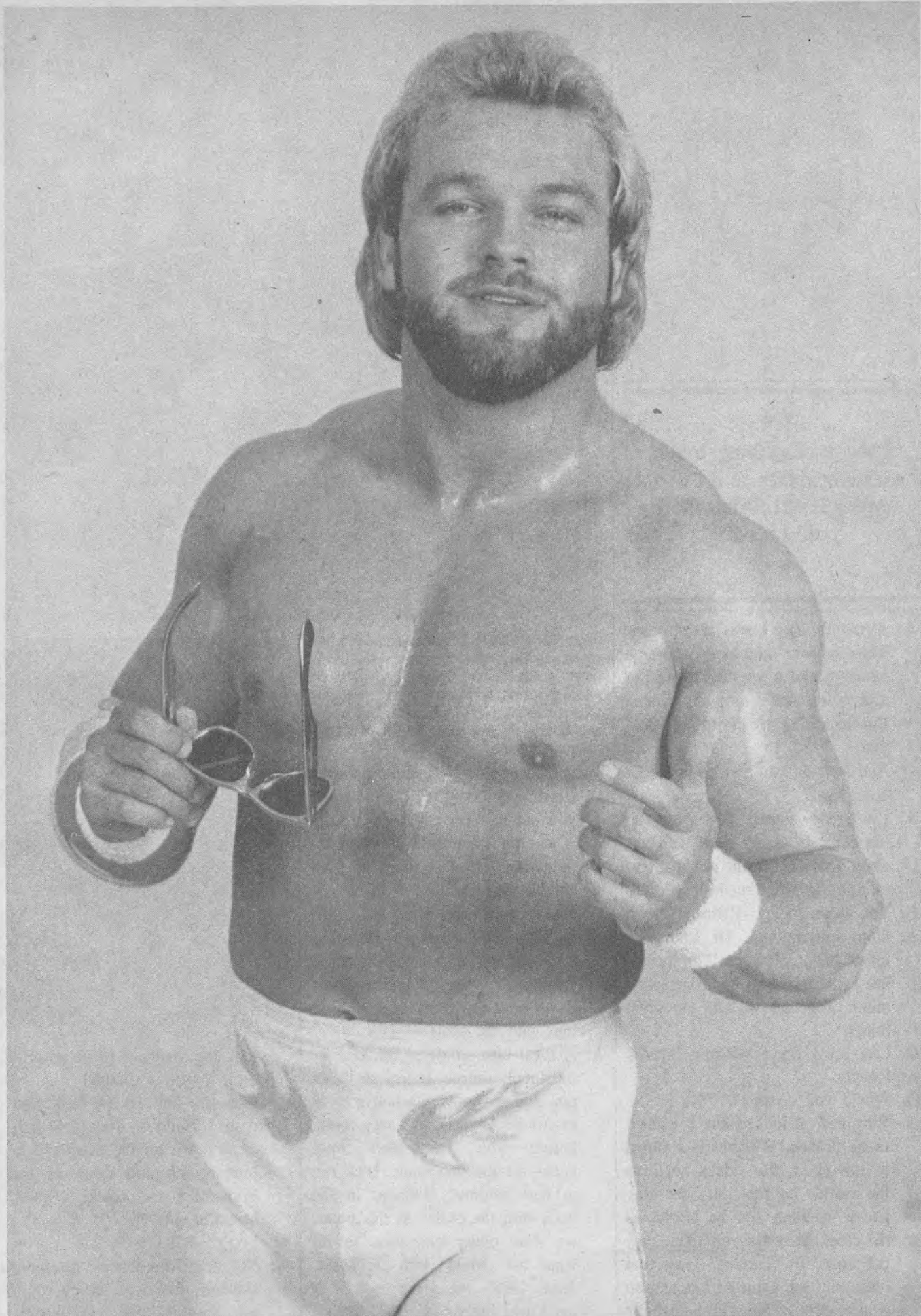
Q: Tell your father that.

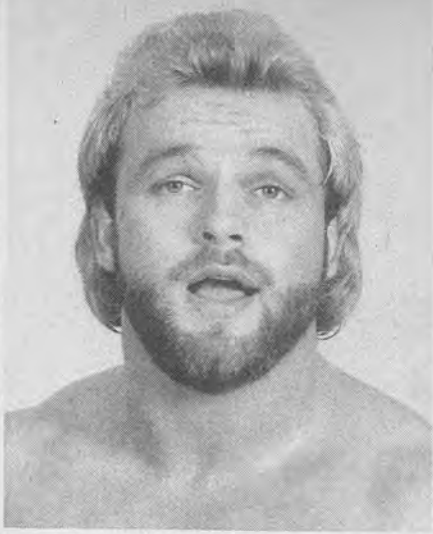
A: Half the time my old man doesn't know what he's doing. There are times when people ask me what my father does and I just tell them that he's a garbage collector or a sewer worker. There's no way I'd tell anybody that he's a referee. It's an embarrassment!

Q: You wouldn't want your son to be a referee?

A: I don't have a son, but if I ever have one, I'll whip his hide if he decides to become a ref. I couldn't think of a worse way to make a living.

Q: Hopefully, he won't have his father's indecisiveness. I'd just like to know what *you* are, a manager or a wrestler?





“

I've got everything: looks, wrestling ability, and I've got Missy Hyatt. What more do I need?

”

A: A month ago I was a manager. Three or four months ago I was a manager and a wrestler. Now I'm a wrestler, and I'm going places. I'm dedicating my life to the UWF title!

Q: And how do you plan to go about doing that?

A: I've already started. Dick Murdoch has come in as my coach and adviser. This man is one of the greatest stars in wrestling history . . .

Q: You mean "Capt. Redneck"?

A: Stop interrupting. Of course I mean "Capt. Redneck," an incredible wrestler with an incredible mind. Together we can do great things.

Q: Like break Steve Williams' arm?

A: Exactly.

Q: Why'd you do that?

A: Why not? It looked like it wanted to be broken. Williams is a threat to this sport. He thinks he owns the world, he runs into the ring like a wildman and he breaks all the rules. Why do you think they call him "Dr. Death"? Does that sound like the name of a man who is in control of himself? Somebody



Eddie Gilbert backs Steve Williams into the ropes, as Dick Murdoch watches (above). Later in the match, Gilbert and Murdoch attack Williams, breaking his left arm (right). Gilbert has taken on Murdoch as his coach and adviser in his quest to win the UWF heavyweight title.

needed to stop him, and we did it.

Q: Maybe you could tell the fans how you did it.

A: It was very impressive. I was wrestling "Dr. Breath" when he tried for an illegal pin.

Q: One second there. There was nothing illegal about that pin. He rolled you over and, to tell you the truth, I think you were holding Williams down so that Murdoch could hit him with the chair.

A: A great idea, come to think of it, but totally untrue. It was an illegal pin, and anybody with half a brain knows it. Anyway, as I was saying before you interrupted once again—at the one-count, Dick ran in and slammed Williams in the back with the chair. At this point, we were under obligation to do what we could with Williams. Now, here's the great part: Williams was flat on his back when I



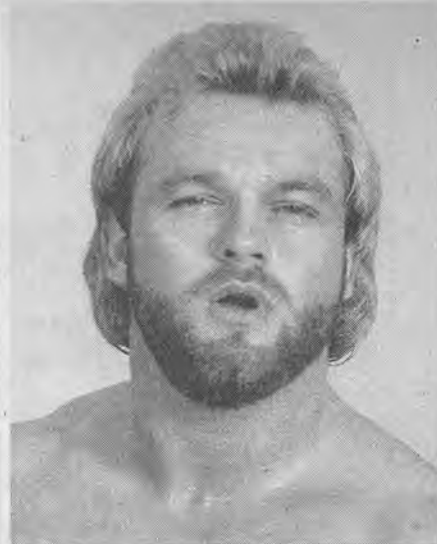
took the chair and slid it up his left arm. Dick climbed up the ringpost—and let me tell you, I wish I could've done this part—came down on the chair and kept jumping up and down. I heard Williams' bone crack! It was a beautiful sound!

Q: You're sick.

A: Not sick, Rosenbaum, determined. Williams has been asking for this for months. He got what he



Gilbert raises Sting's hand in victory. Under Gilbert's management, Sting and Rick Steiner won the UWF tag team belts. After they lost the title and split up, Gilbert decided to devote himself more to wrestling. He and Sting have not been on good terms since then.



“

A man with my athletic ability would cross him [Big Bubba Rogers] up so badly he wouldn't know what to do.

”

They're useless. They're the most pitiful individuals in the entire world. Those who can, do. Those who can't are fans.

Q: Let's talk about Terry Taylor for a moment. What in the world led you to believe that Taylor would accept your offer to manage him?

A: Very simple. Taylor has finally seen the light. Turning on Adams was absolutely the bravest move he ever made. I was very impressed by what he did, and I thought that he might be ready to join Hot Stuff Inc. He refused, but I still wouldn't be surprised if he reconsidered.

Q: I'd be shocked.

A: Say what you want, Rosenbaum, but many men have already realized that Eddie Gilbert is the way to go. Many women too, I might add.

Q: Eddie Gilbert, I must say that this interview has been an education.

A: I'm sure you learned a lot, my man. Anytime you want to come back and learn some more, be my guest. "Hot Stuff" will always be here. □

deserved.

Q: I think most people would say that you got what you deserved when Sting and Steiner lost the tag belts.

A: Listen, I'm not talking about that. The only thing I'll say is that Armstrong and Horner won't have the belts for long.

Q: How can you be so sure?

A: Because they got lucky. If Sting didn't get in my way that night, they wouldn't have won them in the first place.

Q: Sting got in the way? What are you talking about? You hit him with your boot!

A: Yes, but he shouldn't have been there. I was trying to hit Armstrong, but Sting let him reverse that whip. Simply a rookie's mistake, and I don't have time for rookie mistakes.

Q: Well, what were you doing up on the ring apron?

A: Managing. I was being a manager.

Q: Of course. So now you and Sting aren't on speaking terms?

A: Listen, as far as I'm concerned, we had a little misunderstanding. If things work out, fine. If they don't, that's fine, too. Like I said, I'm only concerned with winning the UWF title. That's my primary concern.

Q: Do you really think you can beat Bubba Rogers? He's at least twice your size.

A: It doesn't matter. Size means nothing in this game. And besides, have you taken a look at Rogers? You're telling me that he's an athlete? He might be big, but he doesn't have an ounce of muscle on his body. He can hardly move around the ring, he's so fat! A man with my athletic ability would cross him up so badly he wouldn't know what to do. And don't forget, he beat One Man Gang, another fat slob, for the title.

Q: You don't mince words, do you?

A: No I don't, Rosenbaum, and you know why? Because "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert has guts. I can say whatever I want because I can back up my words. You writers are so jealous of me, it's disgusting. I've got everything: looks, wrestling ability, I'm about to win the heavyweight title, and I've got Missy Hyatt. What more do I need?

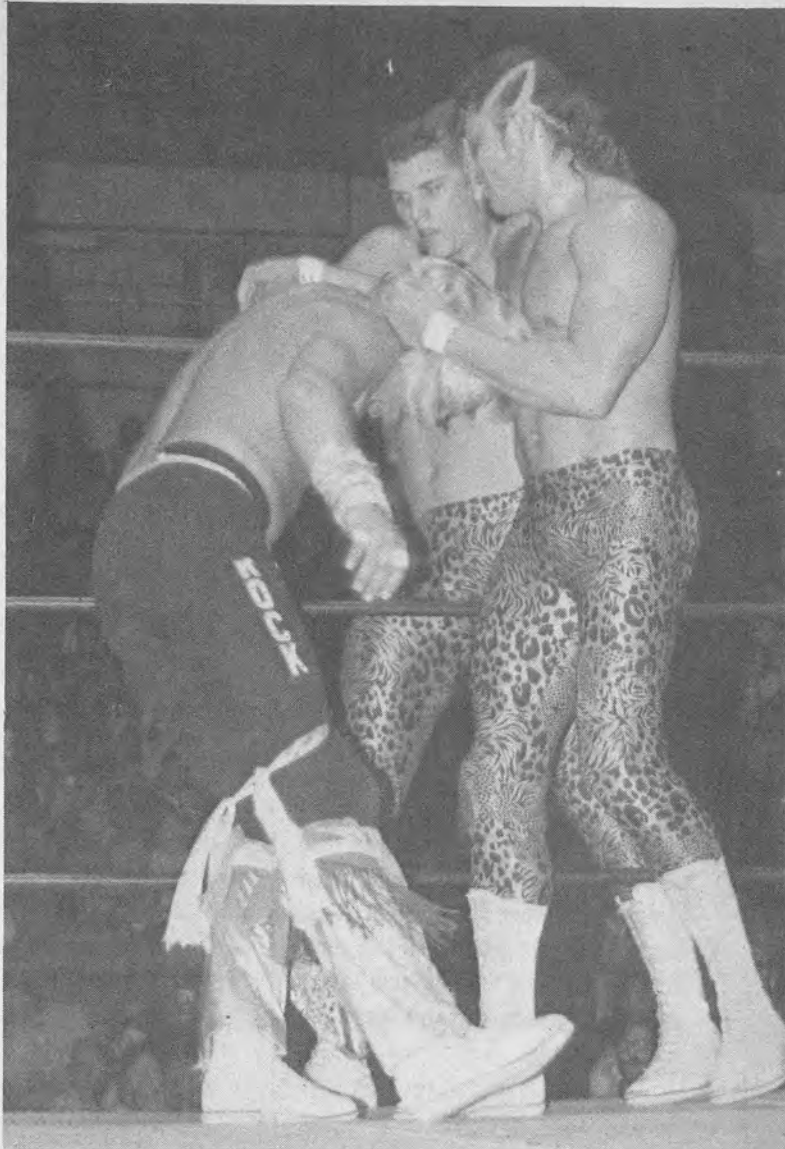
Q: How about the respect of the fans?

A: That's a joke! What the heck am I gonna do with the respect of the fans? They don't take cheers at the bank. Let me tell you something about the fans, Rosenbaum.

The New Breed Declares War:

**"THE
FANS
ARE
ASHAMED
OF THE
ROCK
'N'
ROLL
EXPRESS!"**

Sean Royal and Chris Champion—The New Breed—may be a little strange. They shave their heads oddly and claim to be from the future, but their wrestling tactics are very, very dangerous. Their number-one target now: The Rock 'n' Roll Express

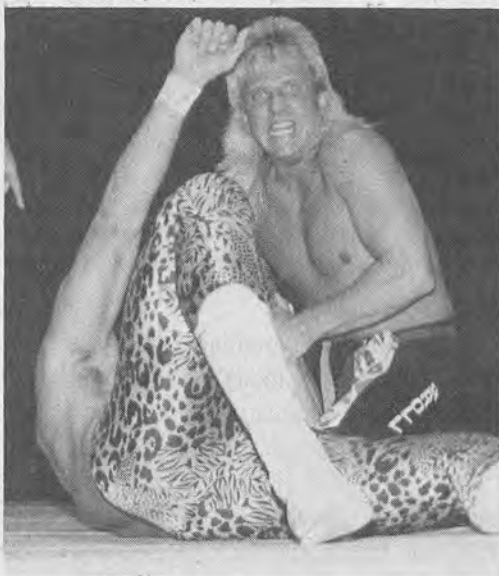


Sean Royal and Chris Champion—The New Breed—double-team Rick Morton (above). They say it is their duty to eliminate The Rock 'n' Roll Express, as well as Jimmy Valiant and Lazor-Tron. Champion hiptosses Robert Gibson (below).





Champion stomps on Morton (above) and Royal headlocks him (below left). The New Breed's strange rituals and odd hairstyles should not obscure the fact that they are excellent wrestlers who pose a real threat to the Express.



Morton has a crazed look on his face as he works on Royal (above). Gibson executes a stepover toehold on Royal (left). The Rock 'n' Rolls are taking this new team seriously.

THERE WASN'T ANY sound in the dressing room, but I could almost imagine the *Star Trek*-style noises of a transporter unit kicking into action. Sean Royal and Chris Champion, sitting opposite each other in folding chairs, seemed to be in some sort of a trance. Their outstretched hands barely touched each other; pinky touched pinky ever so slightly, maintaining the barest physical contact between the two men. But contact nonetheless, and of a remarkably intense fashion. Their breathing was barely audible. It seemed within the realm of possibility that, if the link was broken, both men would vanish into total nothingness.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, Royal and Champion lowered their hands, maintaining the link. Then they slowly pulled their hands back to themselves, opened their eyes, and simultaneously took very deep breaths.

Both men sprung to their feet in an instant.

Royal and Champion shouted in unison: "You gotta fight! For your right!"

Adjusting their sunglasses, their knees became shock absorbers as their torsos bobbed up and down. They still looked like The New Breed, but their physical demeanor was more like that of . . . of . . .

"*The Rock 'n' Roll Express, daddy,*" Champion said in a virtual dead-on impression of Rick Morton's voice. Royal stood behind Champion, playing Robert Gibson to Champion's Morton.

"*Yeah, daddy, we just love it all, we love the fans, we love ourselves, we love the cheers, we love to get the crap beat out of us by The New Breed!*" Champion stopped being Morton and became Champion again in mid-sentence.

Champion and Royal laughed, then turned their attention finally to the reason I was there.

"You want to know all about The New Breed, don't you?" Royal said in a calm but menacing voice. "Well, it is an utter impossibility to understand what The New Breed is all about, be-

cause we are the future of wrestling, we are the year 2002, and in the year 2002 there is no Jimmy Valiant, no Lazor-Tron, and no Rock 'n' Roll Express."

"We've already been the instruments of elimination for Lazor-Tron and Jimmy Valiant, and now The Rock 'n' Roll Express will be next," Champion said. "*Lazor-Tron, Lazor-Tron, The New Breed wrestle Lazor-Tron.*" Champion slipped into the voice of the Martian character from an old Bugs Bunny cartoon (you remember: the little guy with the round head and the broom on his helmet).

"In the year 2002," Champion said, back to his own voice again, "there is no Rock 'n' Roll Express. The reason? *You wanna know the reason?*" (It was a surprise to hear Ralph Kramden's voice coming out of Chris Champion's body, but thankfully it didn't last much longer.) *I'll tell you the reason!*"

"The reason," Royal interjected, "is that by the time 2002 has come and gone, the fans have woken up to the simplistic and insulting reality that is The Rock 'n' Roll Express. By the time 2002 has come and gone, the truth of the matter is that the fans are ashamed of The Rock 'n' Roll Express."

The New Breed are disturbing, though some would prefer to use the word "disturbed." Their claims to be from the year 2002 are patently ridiculous, but one has to wonder about the attitude that underlies those claims. Forget that time travel is impossible—gears have slipped somewhere that allow them to make these claims; moreover, to *believe* in these claims. (And to shave their heads that way!)

Their attitude is one of supreme self-confidence and indestructibility.

And that makes The New Breed very dangerous.

But Royal and Champion are dangerous for more than just their schizophrenic attitude. Their wrestling moves are genuinely impressive, including many new and never-before-seen double-teaming maneuvers that can obliterate an opponent in the virtual blink of



Royal pulls Morton back into the ring. Royal and Champion believe they are indestructible. In fact, their impressive teamwork makes them a very dangerous team.

an eye.

"Our futuristic wrestling tactics are of a nature that today's feeble and underequipped tag teams cannot possibly hope to overcome," Royal said. "Lazor-Tron and Jimmy Valiant have learned the difficulties of encountering The New Breed, and Rick Morton and Robert Gibson will soon know that there are more teams in this space-time continuum to contend with than The Midnight Express or Rick Rude and Manny Fernandez."

The New Breed *are* new—Royal and Champion have barely more than two years of professional ring experience between them, but their moves in the ring are those of a team with far more experience. With, perhaps, 15 years of experience?

"Indeed, 15 years from today is 2002, where we've been partying like it's 1999 for three years already," Champion said with a smirk. "That is where the soul of The New Breed is

bred, that is where the tomorrow of wrestling is coming from. Today might as well be a bygone yesterday, because tomorrow will be here sooner than you think."

"And nobody," Royal added, "is more prepared for tomorrow than the team that created tomorrow, the team that *is* tomorrow, the team that, from the point of view of the future, can do nothing but destroy the teams of yesterday. And The Rock 'n' Roll Express are first on our list."

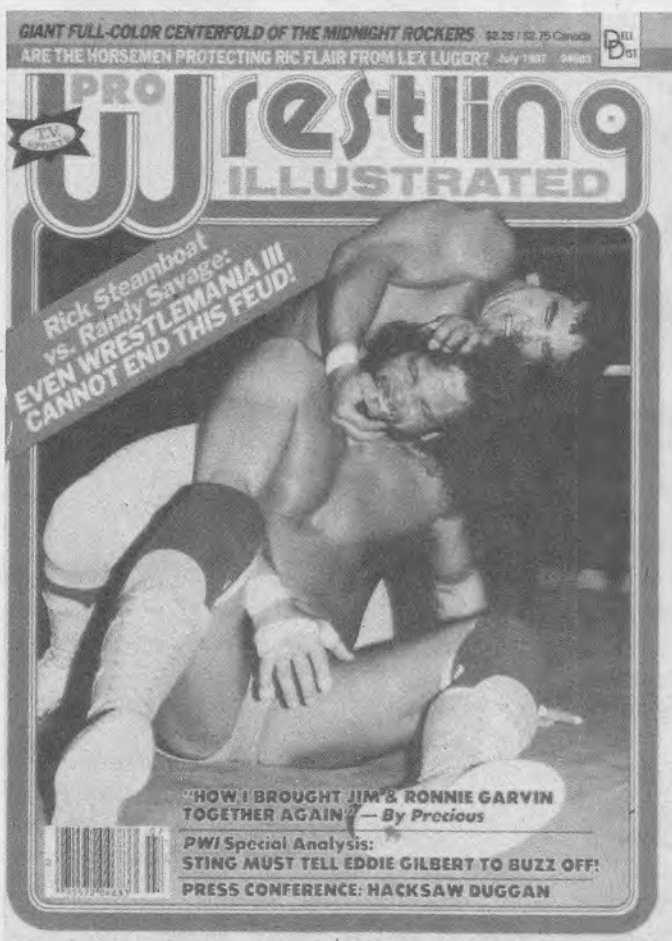
Royal and Champion smiled.

"The New Breed," Royal said smugly, "is the team to watch in the NWA, today, tomorrow, and forever."

Strange as they are, I confess that I have to agree with them. They *are* the team to watch. At least for today and tomorrow.

As for Rick Morton and Robert Gibson, one piece of advice: Do not underestimate The New Breed. □

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The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off . . . One on One

HERE'S ONE FROM the "What Goes Around Comes Around" department: Nick Bockwinkel's latest AWA World championship reign began amidst controversy on June 29, 1986, when Stan Hansen failed to appear for a title defense in Denver. Bockwinkel was awarded the title by AWA President Stanley Blackburn and the wrestling world howled at this decision.

His reign ended on May 18 in Minneapolis when the AWA championship committee ruled by a four-to-two vote that referee Gary DeRusha's decision would stand in favor of Curt Hennig's pinfall victory over Bockwinkel on May 2 in San Francisco.

The latest controversy concerned Larry Zbyszko's apparent involvement in Hennig's victory. After the match, Ray Stevens ran into the ring and claimed that Hennig used a foreign object that was handed to him by Zbyszko. Allegedly, Hennig smashed Bockwinkel with the object before going in for the pin.

The belt was held up pending official review. The AWA reviewed the videotapes of the match before rendering its decision: "The consensus after careful scrutiny of the video footage is that the replay was inconclusive to make a change in the referee's call," read the AWA press release. "Therefore, the referee's decision will stand and Curt Hennig is the new AWA World heavyweight champion."

Bockwinkel was upset, but prophet-

ONE ON ONE



"I've been in this business for a long time and I know when I'm getting hit by a foreign object. [The AWA championship committee] didn't account for what a sneak you've become."

—Nick Bockwinkel

ic. After all, he's a veteran. Hennig, who had recently made the decision to turn rulebreaker after years as a fan favorite, was ecstatic. *Inside Wrestling* brought the two men together to discuss the match, the decision, and Zbyszko . . . "One on One."

CURT HENNIG:

It's a pleasure speaking with you again, Nick. Don't worry, I'll give you a rematch for the title. But don't expect to win it back. The AWA is entering a new era, brother, the era of Curt Hennig. Sorry, old man, the era of Nick Bockwinkel is about 20 years past its prime.

NICK BOCKWINKEL:

That's 20 years and four AWA World championships, youngster, which, by the way, is four more than that old man of yours

ever won. The problem with you, Hennig, is that you come from bad stock. The only way your old man could ever win anything was by cheating. Obviously, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

CH: My old man won four AWA World tag team championships, pops, don't forget that, and not by cheating, and *not* by having them handed to him on a silver platter. I don't recall you as being the golden boy of the rulebook when you were in your prime, so don't go taking a holier-than-thou attitude just because you've got the fans on your side.

NB: Talk about having titles handed to you on a silver platter! What the heck do you call what happened to you? Sixteen days after the fact, the AWA decided to give you the

NONE



"It was a clean pinfall, the tapes showed that. Clean all the way. Are you going to be an ignorant old man and claim collusion and trick photography just to try and save face?"

—Curt Hennig

title. Sixteen days! You seem to forget that in my case, Hansen failed to show up for our match. He was scared. He forfeited the match and I deserved the title. As I remember, you had outside help twice to win your belt: once from Zbyszko and the second time from the AWA.

CH: Wrong. A clean pinfall, the tapes showed that. Clean all the way. If Zbyszko handed me a foreign object, it would have shown up on the tapes, wouldn't it? Or are you going to be an ignorant old man and claim collusion and trick photography and anything else you can imagine just to try and save face?

NB: It's a good thing we're talking on a phone, Hennig, 'cause there's no way you could look me in the eye and say what you just said.

You might have a solid punch, Hennig, you might have hard hands, but I've been in this business for a long time and I know when I'm getting hit by a foreign object. I don't need trick photography to know I'm right. The committee couldn't see what happened from the camera angle. They just didn't account for what a sneak you've become. But, then again, the old Curt Hennig would have never aligned himself with Zbyszko.

CH: The old Nick Bockwinkel would have. You really amaze me, you know that? With your history in this sport, you have the nerve to try and come off so sanctimonious. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Do you think the world is so stupid that they've all forgotten what you've done?

Please, don't be so insulting.

NB: There's one thing you forget, Hennig, and that's the wisdom that comes with age. You young know-it-alls, you think you've got the world in your back pocket, you think you have all the answers, but one day you're gonna realize, just like I have, what a fool you've been. I'm not going to sit here and tell you I've done nothing wrong. But at least I've learned from my mistakes.

CH: Your biggest mistake is in believing that you can regain the title from me. You may accuse me of having the world in my back pocket, but the fact is this: I have the AWA belt around my waist, not you. That's not being a know-it-all, that's a fact.

NB: Now let's get one thing straight, Hennig. I'm willing to wrestle you any day, any time, just name it. I gave you several shots at the World title, now I expect you to do the same. But this time, I don't want Zbyszko at ringside. No seconds, no managers. Just me and you, in the ring, fair and square. I've beaten you before. I'll beat you again.

CH: Fine. Fair and square. Just like in San Francisco, just like the tapes proved. A clean pinfall, my man, a clean victory, just like the AWA championship committee agreed. My title reign already is cleaner than all of your tainted reigns put together.

NB: You can think whatever you want, Hennig. It's your right. The truth is that I'm one of the greatest stars this sport has ever seen, one of the greatest of all time. There are few men alive who can match my record. Listen, Hennig, when you win four World titles, when you've matched my standard of excellence over a period of 20 years, then you can come back to me. Until then, you're just another flash in the pan. You just don't seem to realize, buster, that I don't need to win the title back to establish my greatness. It's already been established. But I *will* win back the belt, because it's mine. It belongs to me. Enjoy it while it lasts, because it won't last long. □

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 18)

is left of his scalp. Despite what goes on in front of the WWF cameras, I know Bobby Heenan has tried contacting Patera at home. "The Brain" knows a meal ticket when he sees one. And he knows Patera is one of the last grapplers available to have a decent shot at beating Hogan.

Watch for those two to reunite by summer's end. And remember where you heard it first.

NEWS ITEM: Curt Hennig wins AWA title.

Better Dusty Rhodes than Curt Hennig ... better Barry Windham than Curt Hennig ... better Rick Morton ... Robert Gibson ... Gary Hart ... Michael J. Fox ... *anyone* but Curt Hennig.

When the Lord said, in His infinite glory, "Let there be mule-headed, fairy-boy, wimpazoids," He had Curt Hennig in mind. I am not surprised. The AWA is the federation of lost causes. In 26 years they've managed only one decent champion, Stan Hansen, and they stripped him of the belt. Hennig is a worthy successor to the likes of Rick Martel, Jumbo Tsuruta, and the twin fossils, Verne Gagne and Nick Bockwinkel.

Stanley Blackburn needs further schooling in the office of AWA President. The videotape fiasco is further evidence of his official incompetence. Larry Zbyszko is laughing all the way to the bank with the check Curt Hennig gave him. I give them credit. In a federation ruled by an administration with no guts, there is glory for the taking.

NEWS ITEM: Stan Lane and Bobby Eaton capture U.S. tag belts.

"I think you're funny," Mama Cornette told me. "You have style and I like that." Never refuse a



The Midnight Express just love their U.S. tag team belts. Cornette may be a wimp, Ellner writes, but he comes from a family of winners.

free lunch was the advice Matt Brock gave to me my first day with this magazine. "It won't ruin your integrity," Brock snorted, "and it won't spoil your appetite."

Which is why I didn't respond to Mama Cornette: "I think you're rich. You have money and you use it to buy people." That would have been impolite. Besides, the sturgeon and caviar tasted too good.

It was Mama who suggested to son Jimmy that he toss Dennis Condrey and purchase a new partner for Eaton. The change in personnel turned The Midnight Express—fast becoming a tired second-rate tag team—into champions. Any time you beat Ronnie Garvin, despite the dead weight of Barry Windham, you deserve recognition.

Say what you will about the racket-wielding wimp—he comes from a family of winners (who eat real well).

NEWS ITEM: "Dr. Death" Steve Williams suffers a broken arm.

A hangnail ... a stubbed toe ... 108 stitches in his eye ... now a broken arm.

Ho hum. Steve Williams long ago stopped differentiating between injuries. "Dr. Death" will not allow a broken bone to keep him from the ring.

Would Curt Hennig say the same? ☐

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RICH & IDOL (Continued from page 37)



Idol piledrives Lawler. This is an insultingly symbolic act, because the piledriver is a famous Lawler move.

chance to get us, but he didn't. That mask didn't fool anybody. He knows it's over for him. Me and Austin rule the roost now. All these wrestlers and those idiots you call fans better start gettin' used to it!"

"And that's not all," Idol crowed. "As the new rulers of Memphis, there are certain things we're demanding. We demand first-class seats on every flight. We demand the best hotel suites and the finest gourmet food. We demand that the most expensive limousines take us to the matches.

"But most importantly," Idol continued, "we demand 10-foot-high statues of us be placed in front of the Mid-South Coliseum. Bronze statues. You know, something tasteful. It's the least these peons can do for us."

When asked who would pay for all this, Rich had a quick answer. "Lawler. After all the embarrassment he's caused us, let him shell out the dough. He's a rich man; he can afford it. And it's only fitting."

"Yeah," Idol said. "The old king should take care of the new kings. The spoils of his kingdom are ours

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Rich aims a punch at Lawler's throat. He and Idol say they will dominate Mid-Southern wrestling for years.

now, right?"

"Wrong!" Lawler shot back when he heard about Rich and Idol's comments. "Forget about their stupid demands. When they talk about the kingdom, they're talking about the respect of the fans. Man, that's something they're never gonna take, not as long as I'm wrestling. I'm still 'The King,' and everybody knows it. Rich and Idol know it, and that's why they have fear in their bellies."

Idol's manager, Paul Dangerly, says Lawler should relinquish the throne before more blood is shed. "The man has to face the inevitable," Dangerly reasoned. "Sure, he burned my face, but I can afford the best plastic surgeons to take care of that problem. His problem is a lot more serious. If my man Idol says Lawler is finished, he's finished. Case closed. My other men are at Austin's disposal, and Bruno has assured me that he'll contribute, so we have more forces on our side than Lawler does. As far as he's concerned, it's over. I'd advise him to leave town before he gets hurt even worse."

Rich and Idol have been after

(Continued on page 52)

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RICH & IDOL

(Continued from page 51)



Lawler ever since they arrived in Memphis. In stark contrast to his pure fan favorite posture of years ago, Rich decided it was high time for some personal glory at any cost; he thought Lawler would be an easy mark. After all, Lawler has been on top for a long time, and a well-planned challenge could knock him off the summit. Just as he had done several years ago, Rich was saying, in effect, "To hell with the fans!"

After Idol joined him, Rich felt confident that he would succeed in toppling The King from his throne. "I could do the job myself, but with Austin there was no doubt," Rich said. "Ever since Lawler tried to screw me out of a shot at [former AWA World champion Nick] Bockwinkel, I was set to get him, no matter what it took. I don't care what the people think. You know, I've heard the cheers and I've heard the boos, and the boos don't bother me like I thought they would. As a matter of fact, I like being booed. It means I'm doin' what I intended to do."

Idol expresses the same confi-

Rich and Idol double-team Lawler, whose partner in this match was Bam Bam Bigelow. Bigelow was still serving his suspension when Lawler's head was shaved. Without Bigelow to help him, Lawler may indeed lose his kingdom.

dence in his partner. "Tommy's a great wrestler, but he never got any credit. People gave up on him because he couldn't hold on to the [NWA] World title. That wasn't fair. He's better than most of the so-called world champions out there. He's the perfect compliment to yours truly. Our reputation is growing by the day."

Aside from their war with Lawler, Rich and Idol have also been getting shots at the AWA World tag team title. They haven't won the belts, but they've come close.

"The tag belts would be nice, but that's not what we're after," Rich said. "We won't be satisfied until Jerry Lawler retires. That's our goal, that's what we're working for. We want everybody to be sure who the boss is around here. We decide who stays and who leaves. When those other losers see what we'll do to Lawler, they'll have to respect us." □

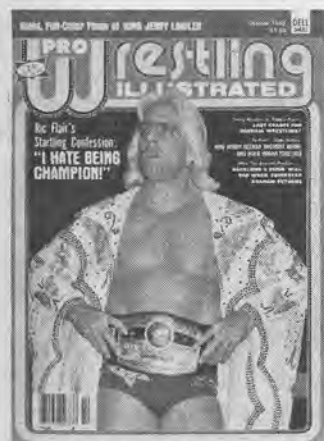
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June 1982/COLOR PINUP: Nick Bockwinkel, Adonis & Ventura, Snuka, Patera, Flair.

August 1982/COLOR PINUP: Dino Bravo, Steamboat & Rich, Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie.



OCTOBER 1982

October 1982/COLOR PINUP: Jerry Lawler, Ric Flair, Rhodes, Graham, Race, Funk Jr.

January 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ken Patera, Rick Steamboat, Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

February 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Putski, Rhodes vs. Garvin, Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

April 1983/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham, Mil Mascaras, Valentine, Orndorff, Hart.

June 1983/COLOR PINUP: Cowboy Bob Orton, Rick Martel, Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

July 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Koloff, Tommy Rich, Patera, Von Erich, Snuka.

August 1983/COLOR PINUP: Larry Zbyszko, Roddy Piper, Sullivan, Zbyszko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

October 1983/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Tommy Rich, Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

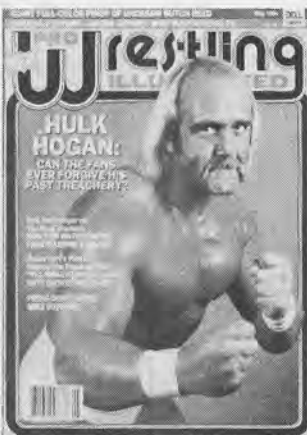
November 1983/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper, Harley Race, Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

December 1983/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel, Dusty Rhodes, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

January 1984/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race, Rick Martel, Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Sunshine, Greg Valentine, Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

April 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rocky Johnson, Ric Flair, Hogan, Andre, Bundy.



MAY 1984

May 1984/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Butch Reed, Hulk Hogan, Road Warriors, Fabulous Ones, Flair, Rotundo.

June 1984/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater, Ted DiBiase, Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering, Jimmy Valiant, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen, Jerry Lawler, Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack, Kerry Von Erich, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel, Sgt. Slaughter, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana, Road Warriors, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A., Rick Martel, Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, Jimmy Snuka, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham, Dusty Rhodes, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter, Hogan vs. Piper, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams, Rick Steamboat, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage, Ric Flair, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura, Great American Bash, Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan, Hulk Hogan, T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff, Mike Von Erich, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair, Wendi Richter, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat, Road Warriors, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich, Hulk Hogan, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy, R & R Express, Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

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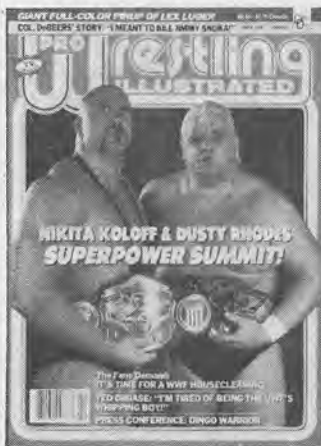
October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd, Nikita Koloff, Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Luger, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll, British Bulldogs, Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

December 1986/COLOR PINUP: Great American Bash, Great American Bash, Midnight Rockers, Von Erich, Windham.

January 1987/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds, Roddy Piper, Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

February 1987/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth, UWF Tournament, T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Orndorff.



APRIL 1987

April 1987/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger, Dusty & Nikita, DiBiase, DeBeers, Dingo, WWF Housecleaning.

May 1987/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams, Andre-Hogan, UWF Tourny, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

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DRESSING ROOM

(Continued from page 10)

nior Editor Bill Apter didn't realize that The Tahitian Prince is the same man who wrestled in the WWF as Samala, Samoan III.

Once I found out that he is the son of Afa, I was more interested in the life of a young man growing up with such a famous, although much-vilified, father than his career in Florida under the management of Sir Oliver Humperdink. Indeed, what is it like to go to school knowing that most of your friends and classmates hate your father? This is not an ordinary situation for most children.

"To tell you the truth, I didn't really care," he said. "And, by the way, stop calling me Mr. Prince. I am known also as The Great Samu. You can just call me Sam." I was delighted to discover a somewhat human side to this arrogant 6'4", 285-pound man.

"I attended many schools as a child," he continued. "Although I was born in Samoa in the South Pacific, I spent most of my life in this country. I spent much time in San Francisco, but I was mostly raised on the road by my father. I started traveling with my father when I was 12."

"So when did you first realize that you wanted to be a professional wrestler?" I asked.

"When I saw my father's paycheck," he responded only half-seriously. "Actually, it was when I saw my father wrestle Bob Backlund around 1981. It was in Madison Square Garden, and once I saw that, I was hooked. It was the crowd, all of the people, even though most of those idiots were rooting against my father." Obviously, it *did* bother him that people hated his father. Otherwise, he wouldn't have referred to the fans as idiots.

"I enjoyed growing up on the road," he continued, "although there were bad sides to it, also."



Every time I'd meet new friends or a girlfriend, as soon as I got to know them, there'd be a U-Haul in front of my house and it would be time to go on to the next state. I've lived in just about every state in the country.

"But that didn't turn me off to wrestling, because after a while I just followed my dad and got interested more and more in the sport. And there was the other good part about him always wanting me to become a professional wrestler. He'd never say, 'Sam, take out the garbage.' He'd always say, 'Sam, go and wrestle' or 'Sam, go and train.'"

Although Samu is only 22 years old, he's already been wrestling for six years. He started off in the World Class area and then went to the WWF, where he was the third Samoan. In 1982, he wrestled alongside his father when Sika broke his leg. "I wrestled all over the place and it was great working with my father," he said. "And when Sika came back, we wrestled six-man tag team matches against Rocky Johnson, Andre the Giant, Jimmy Snuka, Sgt.

The Tahitian Prince chinlocks Mike Rotundo. The Prince is the son of Samoan Afa and spent a lot of time on the road with his father.

Slaughter, Backlund, all the big stars."

In 1986, Samu took off for Canada, where we won the International championship from Dino Bravo in Montreal last summer. He held the belt for eight months before heading south.

Upon his arrival in Florida, Samu immediately joined forces with Humperdink. "Oliver was my father's manager at one time. I think he's the best in the business," said Samu. "He's already gotten me title matches. I've wrestled [Florida champion Mike] Rotundo three times, and it's only a matter of time—of a *short* time—before I beat him."

Although Samu is one of the most vicious wrestlers in Florida, he is loved by the female fans. "That's simple," he explained. "I'm the women's pet, the men's regret. That's my attitude: all this, and good looks, too. What more could anybody ask for? Like I've always said, it runs in the family." ☐

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ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 20)

came over and asked if I wouldn't mind joining him for a drink. He mentioned the name of some place I didn't know. It didn't matter. I wanted no part of the Hennig family. No matter how different he appeared to be from his father, I was certain a couple of cocktails would loosen a deep strain of genetic aggression.

"I'm really nothing like my father," he said after I declined. "Nothing at all."

After a few moments of careful thought, I agreed—on the condition that we went to a local college bar where there would be people I knew. The implication was clear. If I thought he was a jerk, I would leave. He wasn't insulted. Off we were.

The evening is one of the most enjoyable I can ever recall spending with any man, let alone a professional wrestler. Hennig confided to me his fears of the ring and how afraid he was to let his father down. Although he enjoyed wrestling, he often considered quitting to avoid the inevitable comparisons with his father. He loved Larry Hennig, he stressed, but he had seen what the ring had done to him and did not wish for a similar fate.

"There are many other things I can do," I remember him saying. "My father hasn't always been like this; the ring did it to him. I would just hate to one day turn into Larry Hennig."

We said our goodnights. Over the years, as fate brought me closer to the ring, I watched anxiously for signs. None were forthcoming. The polite young man I shared drinks with became the polite young wrestler. A scientific phenomenon. A gentleman in the ring. Sticking mostly to tag teams, Hennig became one of the sport's most sought-after partners. He went on to capture the AWA

World tag team championship with his partner Scott Hall.

In the ring, Hennig was a fierce, though fair, competitor. Outside the ring, during interviews, he was a model of decorum. His greatest fears were never realized: He remained ever the gentleman. We last spoke about five months ago. He commented on the success of The Killer Bees, speaking highly of his former tag team partner, Jim Brunzell. If he seemed detached, I attributed it to his upcoming World title match later that night against Nick Bockwinkel; I wished him luck.

"I need more than luck, Liz," he said. "I'm beginning to think this luck stuff is for losers. And I'm not a loser."

He lost badly to Bockwinkel that night and sulked in the dressing room for hours afterward, avoiding interviews. I would have waited, but I had a plane to catch. Two months ago, a source told me he had seen Larry Zbyszko and Curt Hennig emerge from a restaurant together. Although the source was reliable, the story was so preposterous I didn't report it. I called Hennig and he denied it, too.

"Go out with that worm?" he laughed. "I thought you knew me better than that, Liz."

I thought I did, too. The new Curt Hennig has reached the pinnacle of his profession; he is AWA World heavyweight champion. To achieve the crown, the new Curt Hennig clocked Bockwinkel over the head with a roll of coins. The new Curt Hennig consorts with Larry Zbyszko, possibly the lowest life form in wrestling today. The new Curt Hennig lies to his old friends.

I bet the new Curt Hennig also yells at waiters. In fact, the new Curt Hennig is looking a lot like the old Larry Hennig.

The old Curt Hennig wouldn't have liked that. I wonder if the new one even cares. ☐

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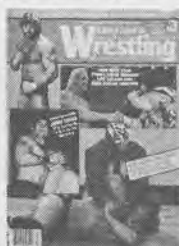
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HOGAN VS. RACE

(Continued from page 35)



Caught in a tight spot, Race rakes Hogan's eyes (above left). Race pulls the champion out of the corner (above right), but is forced to beg for mercy when Hogan stops a kick to the ribs (below left). Race pounds Hogan in the back (below right). Not surprisingly, Race is giving Hogan a lot of trouble in their current feud.



necessary skills, all the abilities and raw materials, daddy, and mentally the man would never give in. I remember matches against him where I thought I had him beat, I thought he was down and out, and then I'd look back and see him rising from the mat.

"The man hated to lose. I know Hogan hates to lose. But taking both men in their respective primes, Hogan wouldn't have stood a chance."

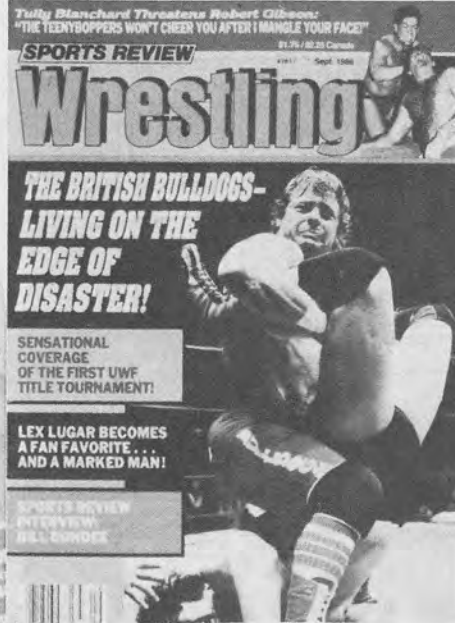
"Those NWA champs are too clannish," says our Senior Editor, Bill Apter, who favors Hogan. "Talking about this kind of a match is probably premature, because I have some doubts about whether Hogan is even in his prime

yet. Wrestlers are different from other athletes. They hit their strides in their late 30s, early 40s. Hogan has proven himself indomitable. Everyone thought Orndorff would beat him. Then Savage. Finally Andre. Thus far he is unbeatable.

"I've been watching Harley Race for over 20 years now. To speak of Race and Hogan in the same breath was blasphemy—until recently. Hogan has narrowed the gap a lot in the last two years. As he gains the confidence to experiment with other maneuvers, he will grow better and better. In the end I think he will be the best."

Buddy Rogers favors Race—barely. "This question reminds me
 (Continued on page 60)

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HOGAN VS. RACE

(Continued from page 58)



Hogan fights his way out of a Race sleeper. Race's years of experience make him more dangerous to Hogan than men half his age.

of when Sammartino beat me for the WWF crown," said the only man to have held both the WWF and NWA world titles. "I was older then, much older than he was. I kept thinking that 10 years earlier I would have crushed this guy like a caterpillar. That's why Race would win. He has the smarts. And it's always been my experience that smarts beat muscle everytime."

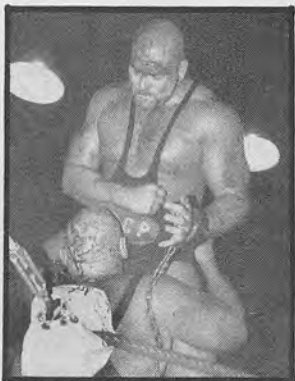
The matchup that will never be would have been a battle of strength versus savvy; a war of nerve as well as muscle. As one of the smartest wrestlers in history, Race would neutralize Hogan's height advantage by taking him to the mat. After a series of leglocks tired Hogan out, Race would fly off the ropes with several flying headbutts. In spite of the relentless assault, Hogan would not give in. As Race flung himself in the air for a final attempt, Hogan would catch him. Both men would tumble out of the ring. Slowly, one would rise, the hungrier man, and he would slide into the ring for the victory.

Which man would that be? It makes for a fine argument, doesn't it? And it would have been a heck of a match!

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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 6)



Brian Adams never would have turned on the Von Erichs if they'd given him a title match, writes Kevin Brands. Kevin has a low opinion of World Class wrestling and believes the organization was hurt by leaving the NWA.

Adams after he defeated Rude and they gave the title to Black Bart, a man who wouldn't last 10 minutes in the ring with a truly great wrestler. And then big, bad Kevin Von Erich goes and wins the title.

With Kerry still recuperating from his motorcycle accident and Mike gone, the only ones left are Lance (a stumbling half-wit with absolutely no talent) and Kevin. As for people stabbing others in the back, the Von Erichs stabbed all their friends in the back by not offering title shots.

Sometimes I wish Nikita Koloff, Randy Savage, and Jake Roberts would go down to that minor-league promotion and tear apart the wimpy, little Von Erichs once and for all!

KEVIN BRANDS
Mt. Pocono, PA

COME BACK, SARGE

I have written to this column before and posed the question: Where's Sgt. Slaughter? You responded that he's in the NWF. Well, who ever heard of the NWF? Obviously it's a minor-league promotion.

I can't believe the Sarge isn't in a major-league promotion. He could beat any wrestler in any of these top promotions. With some of the stiffes I see out there today, I can't believe that none of the major promotions don't want Sgt. Slaughter. They'd rather have an over-the-hill stiff like a Harley Race or an Ole Anderson than have somebody who defends a good cause like Sgt. Slaughter.

You can have The Four Horsemen or Steve Williams or Hulk Hogan. I'll
(Continued on page 64)

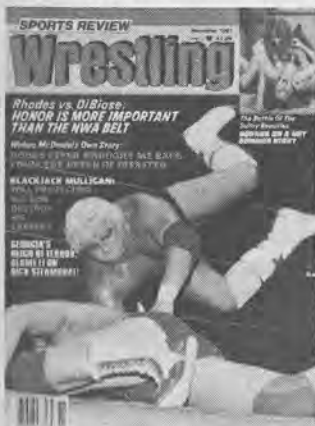
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June 1980/Graham, Patera, Rhodes, Lawler, Zbyszko.
July 1980/Bruno-Graham, Samoans, Star Wars 1980.
October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.
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September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.
October 1981/Rich-Race, Hogan-Hansen, Moondogs, Freebirds, Putschi-Koloff.



NOVEMBER 1981

November 1981/Rhodes-DiBiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.
December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.
March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.

April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D, Ladd.
May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.
June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.
July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.
August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.
October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.
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January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.
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February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.
March 1984/Starrcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.
April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorff.
May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!
June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.
July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourney.

August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces Of Wrestling.
September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.
October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.
November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars!
December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class.
January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, Pro Wrestling USA, Valentine.
February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.
March 1985/Starrcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.
April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwins, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.
May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.
June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A., Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.
July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.
August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorff, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.
September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorff, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.
October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors.
November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.
December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Martel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.
January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.
February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.
March 1986/Starrcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter.
April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.
May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.

June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.
July 1986/Orndorff-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Shepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.
August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourney, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.
September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourney.
October 1986/Orndorff, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.
November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.
December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourney.
January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.
February 1987/Road Warriors, Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.
March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starrcade 86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.
April 1987/1986 in Pictures, Kevin Von Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel.
May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.
June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.
July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steamboat, Adams, NWA in Boston.
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SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 62)



In a display of patriotism, Sgt. Slaughter hands out American flags. John Spada thinks the Sarge is better than most of the major stars in wrestling. He is waiting for Slaughter to return to one of the top federations.

take Sgt. Slaughter over the rest of these talentless, stomach-churning bums. As you were!

JOHN SPADA

Everett, MA

WARRIORS ARE BETTER

In the past few months, I've noticed that not too many people have been talking about The Road Warriors. All the talk has been about The Rock 'n' Roll Express. Yes, I am a fan of the Express, and I still like them. But I want to hear more about the Warriors. They are stronger, better, and—hear this—they're cuter! So now I'm moving The Rock 'n' Roll Express down and moving The Road Warriors up on my own ratings list.

JENNIFER CARDONA

Virginia Beach, VA

ADVANTAGE: McMAHON

Well, I've got to give the devil his due. WrestleMania III was more than I ever expected. Vince McMahon apparently knew last year's WrestleMania was so bad that he corrected his mistakes this year.

On the other hand, the Jim Crockett

Sr. Memorial Cup tournament was so incredibly horrible I may never go to another NWA card. It was a waste of \$50 (yes, \$50), because when tickets went on sale you had to buy for both nights.

The first night I walked out at 9:30 out of sheer boredom. The second night I was determined to stay and yawned throughout the entire card, except when Magnum T.A. made his appearance. That probably justified the \$50 and the boredom.

I don't understand it. It should have been the other way around. Maybe the day has arrived when the Crocketts should ask Vince McMahon how to make next year better. What a sad thought, but after attending both events, it seems to make sense. What's the wrestling world coming to?

SANDI MOFFETT

Baltimore □

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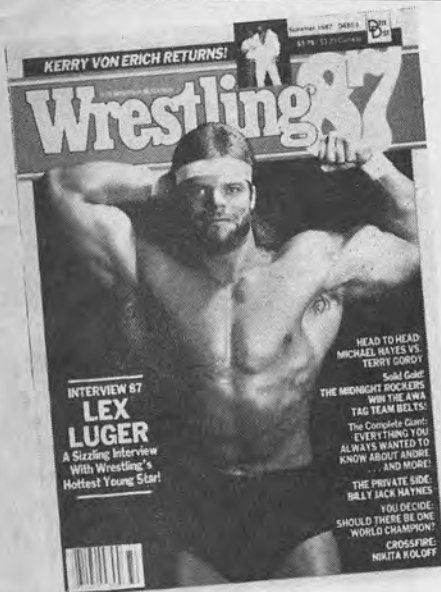
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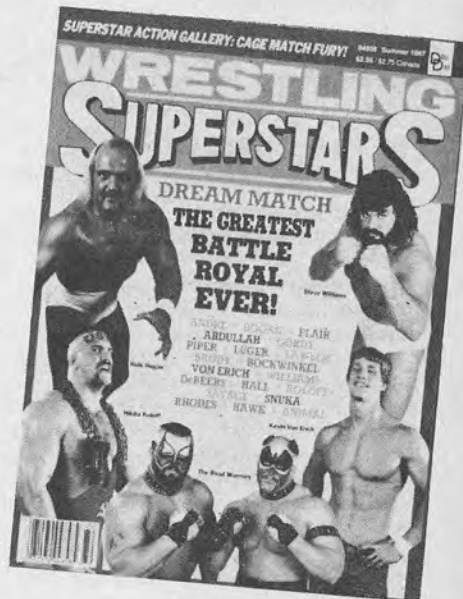
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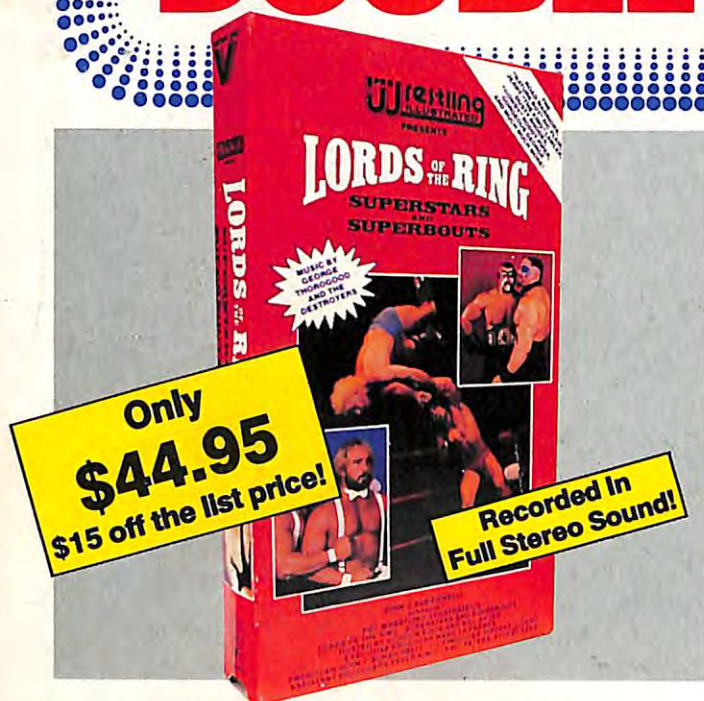
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